Library of the Theological Seminary.

PRINCETON, N. J.

Collection of Puritan Literature.

Division RL

Section

Number

SCB 10896

SERMONS
Preached upon ſeveral Occaſions.

BY

That Able and Faithful Servant of JESUS CHRIST, Mr. *Timothy Armitage*, late Paſtor of a Church in the CITY of *Norwich*.

London, Printed 1678.

TO THE
READER.

Reader,

THese Sermons, Preached divers years since by the Godly and Reverend Author, who is now with the Lord, reaping the fruit of his Holy Labours, which do still follow him; having by the care and pains of a Christian Brother, been preserved, and now brought to Light by the good Hand of Providence, for thy good and benefit, as some other of his Works formerly published, which (if they have come to thy hand) may have been through the Lords blessing: Be pleased therefore to understand, that they were preached and delivered by that Eminent Servant of God,* Mr. Timothy Armitage, *sometimes Pastor of the Church of Christ gathered at* Norwich; *as may*

* *Viz.* Of the woman of *Canaan*: And of the three Children in the furnace.

easily appear unto thee (if thou hast been acquainted with any of his Labours in Print) by that gracious Spirit which breaths and runs through all the Veins, and almost every Line of the same. 'Tis needless to hang out before these Sermons a Bush, to commend the same to thy perusal; do but taste a little, and if thou hast a savoury palate, thou wilt be ready to say as the Samaritanes *to the Woman, that entited them to go to see and hear Christ speak,* Joh. 4.42. Now we believe not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves. *The Subjects herein handled we doubt not but thou wilt find to be very momentous*, and very spiritually treated of: We shall not need to add any more in this kind, but commending them, and thy perusal of them, to the Grace and Blessing of Jesus Christ, in whom we shall desire to remain*

*First, The eminency of Christ, from *Cant.* 2.3.
Secondly, About Forgiving one another, from *Mat.* 18. 21,22.
Thirdly, Walking with God, from *Gen.* 5. 24.
Fourthly, Gain by Christ in life and death, from *Phil.* 1. 21.

Thy Well-willers,

Thomas Allen,

Samuel Petto,

SER-

SERMON I.

CANT. 2. 3.

As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood so is my Beloved among the Sons: I sat down under His Shadow with great delight, and His Fruit was sweet to my Taste.

AS *the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons,* &c. Here are two things considerable in the Words; *viz.* the *Matter*, and the *Form* of them: For the *Form*, it is a Similitude; the *Matter* in it is the Person, and a Thing: The *Person* is Christ, the *Thing* to which this *Person* is resembled, and that is an *Apple-tree*; it's titled by its plantation; *Among the Trees of the Wood*: Then we have the *Application* of this Similitude, in that word, *So is my Beloved among the Sons.*

Here is also an *Illustration* of this similitude in two particulars, which discovers wherein Christ is resembled to the Apple-tree : First, For the *shadow* of it; *I sat under his shadow with great delight.* And then,

Secondly, for the *Fruit* of it; *His Fruit was sweet to my Taste.* There is something observable held forth in the dependance that these words have upon the former : If you look into the second verse, *As the Lily among the Thorns, so is my Beloved among the Daughters.* In that verse Christ sets forth the excellency of his Spouse, declaring the high estimation he hath of her; *She is a Lily among the Thorns, so is my Love among the Daughters.* By how much the Lily is to be prefer'd before the Thorns and Thistles, so much is the Spouse before all other Children, before all other Men, before all other Congregations. Now see how the Spouse doth admire Christ, *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons*; and how the Love of Christ doth beget Love; what Improvement a gracious Heart makes of the manifestation of Christs Love; He declared that he loved her, he loved her dearly above all the World; and presently she breaths love again. There was a Fire of Love, that was kindled in her bosome, which flamed towards Christ; the more love Christ manifested, the more a gracious Heart loves Christ again : You know the Woman in the Gospel, what abundance of love she expresst to Christ; she sat at Christs Feet weeping, and washing Christs Feet with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head; she had much forgiven, many manifestations of Love, in the forgiving her many sins; and therefore she loved much. But again observe, the Spouse doth not rest in that Commendation that Christ had given her; he had highly commended her as a Lily among Thorns: But she carries

the

the commendation back again to him; what ever she hath from Christ, she carries back again to Christ, she'l make him the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the Beginning and the End of all, and therefore she presently falls upon admiration, admiring his Beauty and Excellency. A gracious Heart is more taken with that which is in Christ, than with that which he gives out to it: It doth not rest in Grace that is received, or in Love that is manifested, but it goes back again to Christ, pitches upon Christ in whom are all Divine perfections: She doth not repeat the words of Christ again, as if Christ had said, My Love is a Lily among the Thorns; she doth not say, Oh, now I am a Lily, I am more beloved than all the World: she looks from that presently, she looks to Christ, how shall she make him glorious. The Lord Jesus, he had set a Crown, or at least a Garland upon her Head, and she speedily put off her Garland, and set it upon Christs Head, she thinks it fit that all should be swallowed up in the Glory of Christ. Let him be lifted up and magnified, let his Name and Excellency and Goodness be magnified and remembred, though I be forgotten for ever. Oh that you would be more practical, turn this into practice, make it practical, do as the Spouse did here; let all the manifestations of Love kindle love in your Hearts to Christ, and look not so much what is given to you, as what is laid up in Christ for you: Look upon Christ, and carry it to him, as he is the *Alpha*, so let him be the *Omega*, carry it all back to him again.

But let us look more strictly upon the words, *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons.*

The words are clear enough; only it would be known what is meant by *Son, So is my Beloved among the Sons.*

It may be either the Sons of God, or the Sons of Men: The Sons of God, so the Angels, and so the

Saints are called by *Job* 1.9. *Now there was a day when the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord*; The Angels are his *Sons*, he useth them like Sons, and they serve him like Sons. And so believers are called the *Sons* of God. *Now we are Sons, but it doth not appear what we shall be*, saith the Apostle. If we take it in this sense, still it's true of Christ, that he is the chief among the *Sons*, among all these *Sons of God*; he is far above the Angels; he is made the Head of Principalities and Powers, they are all ministring Spirits unto him.

But we may rather understand it of the *Sons of Men*, because he speaks of such Sons as are Trees of the Forest, Trees of the Wood: *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons.* Among all the Sons of men Christ is the chief that ever liv'd, that ever was planted in the Forest of the World; God the Father hath given him the preheminence, *he hath given him a Name above every Name, He is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth:* He is more excellent than the chiefest of the Sons of Men. Take the best of Men which may be, and they are held forth by the names of *Sons*. *Daughter* in Scripture phrase is a name of *Weakness: Daughter of Sion, Daughter of Jerusalem*: God would shew what poor weak Creatures his people are without him: *Son*, is a name of strength, and honour, and dignity; Among all the Sons of all the Honourable Men in the World, among all the Princes and Potentates in the World, Jesus Christ he is the most desirable, he is more excellent than they: He is more excellent than the tallest Cedars, than the greatest Oaks in the Wood; *As the Apple-tree amongst the Trees of the Wood*: Here seems to be a double comparison.

First

First of all, the Sons of men are compared to the Trees of the Wood.

And then Secondly, The Son of God is compared to the *Apple-tree* among those Trees, in the midst of those Trees.

First, The Sons of men are compared to the Trees of the Wood, Trees of the Forest: And this holds forth the state and condition of men by Nature; Every man by nature is a wild Tree, he is not in Gods Garden, but is cast out into the open Field, it's a Tree of the Forest, not a Tree of the Orchard. We speak of the corrupted nature of man, what man is since the fall of *Adam:* For when God made him at first, he planted him in Paradise, and he was the chiefest Tree there, brought forth most excellent and delightful fruit unto God; but you know how *Adam* degenerated, he turned a wild Tree, and brought forth sowre Fruit; and therefore God pluckt him up by the Roots, and threw him out of Paradise; so that he and all his posterity after him were for ever after Trees of the Wood, and Trees of the Forest; he brings forth nothing but wild Fruit, till such time as the Lord is pleased to take poor creatures and ingraft them again upon Jesus Christ, who is the *Root of Jesse*, that they may bring forth better fruit unto him.

Now I shall shew wherein this comparison holds: Every man by Nature is a wild Tree, a Tree of the Wood, a Tree of the Forest.

1. First of all, He either brings forth no fruit, or else he brings forth sowre fruit; he is an unfruitful creature; *Israel is an empty Vine*, God complains; And so it's true of every man by Nature, he is an empty Vine; he is an unfruitful Tree; if he brings forth any fruit, it's wild fruit, it's sowre fruit; as is spoken of in *Deut.* 32. 32. which doth well resemble the condition

dition of all men by Nature. *Their Vine is a Vine of Sodom*, they are of the field of *Gomorrha*. Here's the fruit that every mans Nature brings forth; It's a Vine of *Sodom*, and a field of *Gomorrha*; sowre fruit, and bitter fruit, and curſed fruit. This is the fruit that man by Nature brings forth.

2. Again, Secondly, The Trees of the Wood or Foreſt, ſo long as they remain there, they are unprofitable; they are not of that uſe which the Trees of the Orchard, or the Trees of the Garden are, they are not only uſeful for their fruit, but they are a great Ornament to a mans ground or houſe; and they are alſo a defence to a mans houſe. A Tree nigh at home, at the houſe ſide keeps off many a Blaſt, and many a Storm; and ſuch are the Trees that are of Chriſts planting: Oh they are a Beauty, they are an Ornament. The Godly man is an Ornament to the place where he grows; The Godly man is a defence to the place where he grows; he keeps off many a ſtorm and Judgement from the place where he lives; and others fare the better for his ſake. But now the Trees of the Wood, they are altogether unuſeful, they ſerve for nothing but to ſhelter the Serpents, and to ſhelter the wild Beaſts, and this is the condition of every natural man. Oh what Serpents, and what wild Beaſts, what baſe luſts, and what hideous Monſters are ſheltered in the heart of a Natural man, that is a ſtranger to Chriſt?

3. Again, Thirdly, The Trees that are in the Wood or Foreſt, they grow in Wilderneſſes, and have none to look after them, there's none prune them, there's none to hedge them, they lye open to all dangers, to the Horns and to the Teeth of the wild Beaſts, that will eaſily knock off all their Budds and Springs, break and eat off their bark, and keep them from growing, and the like: And truly this is the condition of every Natural man;

man; he is as a Tree in the Forest, as a Tree in the Wilderness; there is none to look after him, there is none to prune him, and to take away unfruitful branches, that he may bring forth fruit to God, God doth not look after the Trees in the Forest: It's true, Christ is the Fathers Husbandman, and he doth cut off unfruitful Branches; he cuts off unfruitful Trees that bring forth untimely fruit. But he doth this to such as are in his Garden, to such as are in his Christ. Thus the Father takes a special care of his. The Lord makes a round hedge about his people; he'l keep all hurtful things from them. See what is said to *Job*: The Devil confesses the goodness of God unto his people in this respect, *Job* 1.10. *Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?* It's a most certain truth, that God hath made a hedge about his people, a hedge about him, a hedge about his person, a hedge about his house; that is, a hedge about his family, a hedge about his Friends and Relations, a hedge about his people. There is a three-fold hedge that God makes about his, that are of his planting: But now it's not so of the Trees in the Forest, of the Trees in the Wilderness, there's no hedge made about them, they lie open to a thousand dangers; they lie open to the furious assaults of *Satan*, and to the prevalency of all Temptations, lie open to dangers from all the Creatures, there's no hedge about them: God hath not made a League with the Beasts in the Field for them. Here is the misery of a man out of Christ, it is set forth by a Tree that is in the Wilderness, a Tree that grows in the Wood: And therefore a word of Application to this particular.

Use. Beloved, This lets us see the necessity of being planted into Christ by faith. We are all of the wild Olive, and the wild Vine; and therefore there is a necessity, that every man should seek after his transplanting

ing into Christ. Oh that the Lord would make you willing to be pluckt up by the Roots! You that are out of Christ, be willing to be pluckt up by the Roots, that you may be planted into Christ. There is some rooting that every natural man hath which he is loth to be pluckt from: One man is rooted into the World, and another is rooted in his lusts, and another is rooted in himself, in his own righteousness, in his own works, in his own strength, in his own performances. Oh that the Lord would make you willing to be pluckt up from all that Root, that in which you have any thing besides Christ: Here is the great difficulty, to bring off the wills of men. Men cry out many times, Oh it is a hard matter, Oh it's an impossible thing, that ever they should be pluckt up from such Rooting: That they have such lusts, Trees which are of twenty, thirty, forty years growth; and all that time rooting deeper and deeper: Is it possible that such should be plucked up by the Roots, and planted into Christ?

My Brethren, it's possible if men were willing to be pluckt up, the Lord would soon accomplish it. You know what Christ said to his Disciples; that if they had *Faith as a grain of Mustard-seed, they should say to this Cedar, be removed into the Sea, and it should be so.* Why, the Lord can make poor Creatures to do that which is impossible for sense and reason to think may be done: Oh what is it that the Lord can't do! There is no Oake, there is no Cedar, so strong and so tall, and so deeply rooted, but the Lord can say, Be thou removed, be thou plucked up by the Roots: There is no Tree so barren, there is no Soul grows in such a barren Soyl, but the Lord can say, Be thou plucked up, and be thou rooted in that fruitful Soyl. Oh that the Lord would make the hearts of men willing to be pluckt up by the Roots, from that rooting which

which they have in sin, or which they have in themselves, that so they may be planted in a better soyl, and rooted in the Lord Jesus. Do but remember this, that you may see what a necessity there is that every man should seek after their planting in Christ. Why, so long as you are out of Christ, you are wild Trees, so long as you are out of Christ, you bring forth no fruit; you bring forth no good fruit. Our Saviour makes it an impossible thing, in *Mat.* 7. 17. *Even so every good Tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt Tree bringeth forth evil fruit:* It's impossible that ever the fruit should be good so long as the Tree is evil. Now so long as a Man is out of Christ, he is an evil Tree, he is a wild Tree, a Tree of the Wood, a Tree of the Forest, not a Tree of the Garden. Oh that men would be made good, that their Trees might bring forth good fruit. Truly it's in vain to teach men to bring forth good fruit, until such time as the Tree be made good. If the Tree were made good, and ingrafted into Christ, it's impossible that that good Tree should bring forth evil fruit. Oh know you that have Interest in Christ, that all the fruit that you bring forth out of Christ is lost; I say, Men and Women, they lose all their fruit; It's such as the Lord can't accept of, such as the Lord doth not delight in. The Lord could not endure that fruit that *Israel* brought forth, in the first of *Isaiah*, they were a *burden* to him, their fruit he was weary of; they and all the fruit that they brought forth to God were cast out: What a pitiful thing is it that a man should lose all his fruit, all his Labour, and all his pains? Yea truly, till a man be in Christ all is lost. You know the young man in the Gospel, that came to Christ, he had a great deal of good Moral fruit, he had *kept all the Commandments*, he said,

from

from his youth, and yet all that fruit was lost, it withered and fell off before it was ripe, it rotted and perished, it was never gathered by Christ, his Soul did never eat of it, it was no delight to him; And why? because though the Tree had a great deal of seeming good fruit on it, yet it was an evil Tree, it was a wild Tree.

Nay, Let men consider further, what a fearful word was spoken against such wild Trees, as bring forth no fruit to God, or such fruit as is sowre, as his Soul can have no pleasure nor delight in; it was a dreadful Word spoken by *Daniel,* which was spoken concerning the great Tree; see *Dan.* 4. 14. *Hew down the Tree, and cut off the Branches, and scatter the Leaves, and the fruit.* Why, this was spoken of the mighty Tree, which reached up to Heaven, a Tree that did fill the whole Earth with its outward Glory; and yet of this very Tree, God said, *Hew it down,* and it was hewn down. Oh that men would remember, there is no outward priviledge, that can exempt a man from the stroak of the Lord. He can breath upon the tallest Cedars, and the greatest Oaks; if the Lord blow upon them, they shall wither as the Grass in the Field: *Now is the Ax laid to the root of the Tree,* saith *John* the Baptist, in Mat. 3 10. *Therefore every Tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire.* Now that the Gospel is preached, now that Christ himself is come to offer terms of peace unto him, now that God from Heaven hath declared his willingness to pluck men out of the cursed Soyl of Nature, and to implant them into his Son; now, now, if men submit not unto Christ, if they continue obstinate, hew them down and make them fewel for unquenchable Fire. Oh now see then how it concerns every man to seek to be implanted into Christ. It's

not

not a leaning upon Christ that will serve mens turns, but there must be a planting into Christ, a rooting in Christ: the Apricock doth lean upon the wall, but it's not rooted into the wall, it hath not its life from the wall, but it's rooted in the Ground. And so many a poor creature may pretend, he is leaning upon Christ, and in the mean time he is rooted in the World, in his filthiness, in his base lusts and corruptions, this man is not rooted into Christ: So much to that first Similitude. Thus you see that the Sons of men are compared to the Trees in the Wood, to the Trees in the Forest; *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons.*

The Son of God (I shall speak but a Word to that) he is compared unto the Apple-tree in the midst of the Trees in the Wood, or of the Forest.

But why is the Son of God set forth here by the *Apple-tree*? There are many Trees that are of more worth than the Apple-tree; why not the Cedar? and why not the Oak? Why set forth here by the *Apple-tree*?

First of all, Christ is set forth by the Apple-tree for the *fruitfulness* of this Tree. It's a fruit-bearing Tree; it brings forth abundance of useful fruit; and therefore Christ is usually set forth by this Tree rather than others. It's a very fit Simile to set forth Christ by the Apple-tree; Christ was a fruit-bearing Tree. Oh what abundance of pleasant delightful fruit did Jesus Christ bring forth! Such as did rejoyce the Soul of God his Father, and of men and Angels. He was fruitful all his days; he continually brought forth fruit, all the time of his being upon Earth, all the time that he was planted by the Father, in the Nursery here in this world. He was fruitful even upon his first planting

planting here, he made it his meat and his drink to do the will of his Father. He was never well but when he was bearing some fruit. The fruit that Christ bare when he was upon Earth, it shall last to Eternity; It's that which the Saints shall feed upon for ever and ever. The fruit that the Apple-tree bears, it's both an Ornament to it self, and it's exceeding beautiful, and beneficial unto others; and therefore still fit is it to set forth this Simile, for it's a fruit-bearing Tree, a beautiful sight, a delightful sight: The Lord Jesus he was laden with fruit, every Branch and every Bough full of fruit. It's said, *We saw his Glory as the Glory of the only begotten Son, full of Grace and truth.* So Christ he is full of Grace and Truth; and this is the Glory of the only begotten Son, being full of Grace and full of Truth. And then he is of benefit to others. The fruit of this Tree is exceeding beneficial to others. How many are fed, and nourished and refreshed by the fruit of the Apple-tree? It's a Tree that man could not spare of all the Trees that God hath planted. The fruit this Tree brings forth, it serves both for Meat and Drink; it will both satisfie the Appetite, and quench the thirst also, which many other fruits will not do. Thus still this holds forth Christ, who is compleat nourishment to his people, he *is meat indeed*, and he is *drink indeed*; he satisfies the hungry Soul with good things, he quenches the thirst of the poor, dry and parched Soul. There is a drink that is made of Apples, which is very useful (we know) for the quenching of thirst, for the allaying of heat: Such is that refreshment that Christ gives out unto his people; he is content that his very heart blood should be squeezed out, that so his people might drink of it, that they might be refreshed, cooled and revived, that all the heat of his Fathers wrath might be allayed in them.

This

This is the will of Christ, this is a Similitude that Christ is held forth by, like unto an *Apple-Tree.*

2. Then Secondly, For the *shadow* that this Tree casts, that also is held forth in the Text, *I sat under his shadow with great delight; and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* There are some Trees that bear fruit, but cast no great shadow; other Trees cast a shadow, that bear no fruit that is desirable. Ay, but both these meet in Christ; he is as the Apple-tree that brings forth fruit, and also casts a comfortable shadow. This makes the fruit more delightful, when a man can stand under the shadow and gather the fruit of the Tree; it makes the fruit exceeding pleasant to him, he is not scorched with the Sun whilst he gathers it. Oh there is a sweet shadow, a sweet comfortable and refreshing shadow, which the Lord Jesus doth cast over his people, whilst they pluck that fruit, and eat of that fruit which grows upon him. But then,

3. Again, Thirdly, His fruit is commended for the *Smell* of it, in *Cant.* 7. 8. *Now also thy Breasts shall be as a cluster of the Vine, and the smell of thy Nose like Apples.* That is, that very breath that comes from thee, all thy breathings they are sweet and comfortable, they have a sweet savour in them; thy breathings after God and Christ they are full of Grace; and they are full of holiness. *The Smell it's like the smell of Apples:* There are some Apples that are of a very fragrant smell, as your Pomecitrons and others, and some have thought them to be the Apples here meant in the Text; and this doth well set forth the Lord Jesus, for that sweet and fragrant smell that he sends forth. Oh what a sweet savour was he unto God! And what a sweet savour is he unto man! It's said, *he offered himself a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour*

unto God: He carried his sacrifice as his fruit, and it was a sweet smelling savour unto God. And so Christ is a sweet smelling savour unto man also; where there is any thing of Christ in a Creature, it makes that Creature sweet; where there is any thing of Christ in an Ordinance, it makes that Ordinance smell sweet; where there is any thing of Christ in a duty, it makes that duty smell sweet. *Because of the sweet savour of thine Oyntment*, it's therefore the Virgins follow thee. It's Christ that makes the Gospel of a sweet savour; Christ in a person, or Christ in an Ordinance, or Christ in any condition makes that thing sweet.

4. And again, Fourthly, This Tree it's a *Common Tree*, and therefore Christ would rather be resembled by this Tree than by any others, which are not so common, and are not so useful. There is almost no part in the World but hath some kind of Apple trees. It's a fruit more common than many others, that even the poorest may eat of it. And therefore the Lord Jesus he may be resembled by this Tree, to hold forth, that he is a common saviour, that he is free for all poor creatures to come unto, he is the Apple-tree in all parts of the World, that men in all places might come in and feed upon him and be satisfied. And therefore he is said to be *A Fountain set open*, in *Zech.* 13. *A Fountain set open*; it shall not be sealed up, but a Fountain set open. The Gospel tenders Christ freely; and in that respect is Christ compared to *A fountain set open.* He is also compared here to an Apple-tree for the commonness as well as for the usefulness of that fruit, that none might plead Ignorance, that they might not plead excuse, that none might say he was such a fruit as none could buy, that they could not come at. No, Christ would be resembled unto that which is common, that he might be held forth freely unto poor lost sinners under the Gospel.

5. And

5. And then fifthly and lastly, He is set forth by the Apple-tree for the *variety of fruits* which it does bring forth, and do grow upon this Tree. There is no Tree that brings forth such *variety* of fruit. How many sorts, several kinds of Apples? they are almost innumerable. And truly in this respect Christ is the Apple-tree, because of those innumerable precious Gifts and Graces which do grow upon him. The fulness of the Spirit was poured out upon him; it made him to bring forth fruits of all kinds. He is the only begotten Son of God full of Grace and Truth: There can be no excellency, nor no perfection named, which is not to be found in the Son of God, they all do concenter and meet in him. I shall say no more at this time, but leave the Metaphor unto your consideration; think of it. The Lord Jesus was pleased to be resembled to an Apple-tree. And what great condescension of Love is this, that he should stoop down so low to set forth himself under such a mean comparison, that we might know what goodliness and sweetness are in him: Abundance of the love of Christ is held forth in this, that he should choose to be set forth by such a Tree as this is, by the Apple-tree; you see the Lord Jesus Christ would rather choose a Fruitful Tree, than a Great Tree, than a Strong Tree, he having such a delight in being *Useful*, in being *Serviceable*, in *Bringing forth Fruit* unto his Father; Fruit that should be for the good of the Sons of men. And therefore let us look to Christ, and labour to imitate Christ; the Lord he delights in a fruitful Tree, rather than in a Tall Tree, or in a Strong Tree; it's the Greatest Commendation that can be, to be Fruitful, and Serviceable, to bring forth Fruit

to God and our Generation; Christ chose this, and let us choose it too; and let us look to God who is the Husband-man, who makes all his Trees to be fruitful Trees in his due time. So much for this time.

SERMON II.

CANT. 2. 3.

As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons: I sat down under His Shadow with great delight, and His Fruit was sweet to my Taste.

I Have made entrance the last day: Here is a double comparison, the Sons of men are compared to the Trees of the Wood; The Son of God is compared to the *Apple-tree* among those Trees.

I shall add a fifth particular wherein the resemblance holds.

5. Christ here is set forth as the Apple-tree: It seems to relate to the fruit of that Tree that Man did eat in Paradise, which in all probability was a kind of Apples: And herein we call to mind how man lost his happiness, where it was that man undid himself, how sin came into the World by eating of the forbidden fruit; as also it holds forth that *Christ hath taken away that Curse* all

all the bitterneſs and wrath for his people, which was the fruit of *Adams* tranſgreſſion. There was man undone at firſt, under the Apple-tree, there he loſt himſelf, and God, and Happineſs: And therefore Chriſt will be an Apple-tree as ſhall bring forth better Fruit, the Fruits of Peace, Joy, Life and Salvation for his people: See what is ſaid, *Cant.* 8. 5. *Who is this that cometh up from the Wilderneſs leaning upon her Beloved? I raiſed thee up under the Apple-tree: There thy Mother brought thee forth, there ſhe brought forth that bare thee.* Some make it to be the words of the Spouſe to Chriſt, *I raiſed thee up under the Apple-tree*; She looks up to Chriſt, and ſaith, Lord *I took hold of thy Boughs*, I took hold of thy Covenant, I took hold of thy Promiſe by Faith and Prayer, there I raiſed thee up: He roſe up to be a help and deliverer of his people. But others make them to be the Words of Chriſt; Chriſt ſpeaks unto his Spouſe, *Under the Apple-tree there I raiſed thee up.* It ſhould ſeem to have a reference to the Tree which was the Occaſion of Mans fall. Thou loſt thy ſelf under the Apple-tree, there was thy fall; there did the Devil thruſt down Man, *Adam*, and all his poſterity. Well ſays Chriſt, I'le be an Apple-tree, and under this Apple-tree i'le raiſe thee up again: under this Apple-tree thou ſhalt be comforted, thou ſhalt be ſaved, i'le raiſe thee up again. The Lord Jeſus he came to undo the works of *Satan*, becauſe *Satan* had undone the Works of his Father, and ſpoiled the whole creation with ſin; and therefore thus will Chriſt be avenged of him: Chriſt will be ſuch an Apple-tree, that will bring forth that fruit which ſhall be the deſtruction of *Satan*; the deſtruction of Death and Hell, which were brought into the World by the diſobedience of *Man* under the Tree. So then I ſay this may be held forth,

1. First, That the Lord would have his people remember what they lost in *Adam* by their disobedience, and then the Lord would have them remember the Lord Jesus, he hath taken away all that curse, and all that wrath which was the desert of mans disobedience; so that it shall not be poured upon believers. And so much for the comparison betwixt Christ and the Apple-tree.

2. It's said further, That he is as *the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood.* The next work then is to enquire after that comparison; Why is Christ said to be the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood? Why not among the Trees of the Garden? There is much in this comparison; receive it with *Attention*, for I shall be but short in this work.

1. First of all, It holds forth, That the Lord Jesus took the same Nature that we have, he became man; he took upon him the Nature of man. It's true, he was not a wild Tree, but he was a Tree as well as the rest of the Trees in the Wood; he was of the same Substance with them; he had the same Body, the same Bark, the same Rind, the same out-side, that other Trees had; he was in all things made like unto us, we read in *Heb.* 2. 14, 17. *For as much then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; wherefore in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the People,* &c. It was needful that he should be made partaker of Flesh and Blood, there was a Necessity of it. For first of all,

1. The Lord Jesus was that stock or that root, upon which God the Father had determined to graft all the Sons and Daughters of men, that he had appointed to be

Trees

Trees of Righteousness in his Paradise. I say all that were to be made Trees of Righteousness, were to be engrafted into that stock, and therefore there was a necessity that the stock should be like unto the Cyons, it was necessary that the branch and the root should be of one nature.

Again, The Lord Jesus was to fill all his Branches with Life and Spirit, the Sap and Juice must run from the root to the Branches, and therefore it was necessary they should be Homogeneal, of one Nature; that they should be incorporated, and made one, that so Christ might fill our Nature, that humane Nature which he took into the second person, with all the fulness of God, and from that, and through that, fill all his Members. That's the First, That Christ is compared to an Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood.

2. But again Secondly, This comparison does hold forth the unspotted Nature, and that holiness which was in Jesus Christ; It holds it forth in the excellency of it: He was an Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood: He was not a wild Tree as they were, though he grew amongst the wild Trees; though he grew in the World, yet he did not partake of the sin of the World; there was no corruption in him, he brought forth no wild fruit: And herein is the excellency of Christ held forth. To see an Apple-tree, a sweet Apple in the midst of an Orchard, is no great wonder; but to find an Apple-tree laden with goodly and pleasant fruit, where there is nothing but a Wood and a Forest, and wild Trees, and Bryars, and Thorns, and Brambles round about, this is a wonder; and even thus was the Lord Jesus, the Trees round about him were wild Trees; *they are all gone out of the way* (it's spoken of the wild Trees) *and became altogether unprofitable, there is none that doth good no not one.* This is the natural Estate of all men;

and that Christ should be planted in the midst of these, and yet be an Apple-tree, and bring forth sweet and blessed fruit, this was his great commendation; and the Spouse does here admire him for it. Before he was admiring the Spouse, *as a Lily among Thorns*, the tender Lily among the Thorns; and here the Spouse doth admire that the Lord Jesus should be a green Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood: That none of the corruption of mans Nature should cleave unto him, that he should bring forth nothing but pleasant fruit; he was the Lamb of God without spot, and *there was no guile found in his mouth:* Here is the great Commendation of Christ; still a pleasant Apple-tree, though in the midst of the Trees of the Wood.

3. Again, Thirdly, The comparison holds forth the High and Honourable esteem that the Spouse had of Christ, *As the Apple-tree amongst the Trees of the Wood*; as the Apple-tree is to be preferred before the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved to be preferred before all the Sons of men: He had preferred the Spouse as much as the Lily is to be preferred before the Thorns: And here she returns his love back again, saith she, He is to be preferred before the Sons of men; as the Apple-tree is to be preferred before and beyond the Trees of the Wood. What saith the Apostle in *Phil.* 3. speaking of all things in comparison of Christ *to be but Dung and Dross*: *Yea verily*, saith he, *I count all things but Dross and Dung in comparison of Christ*; how precious is Christ to a gracious soul! all is but Dross and Dung in comparison of him; *to you that believe*, (saith the Apostle *Peter*) *he is precious*; you that have tasted of the comforts of this Tree, you'l say, Oh Lord, give me evermore to eat of this Tree: That's a third particular wherein the comparison holds.

4. Fourthly,

4. Fourthly, It holds forth that mean and low Estimation that the men in the world have of Christ. They look upon him as a Common tree; he is among the trees in the wood; and he is of no better account than the trees of the wood, *Cant.* 5. 9. *what is thy beloved* (say they) *more than anothers beloved?* They could not believe, that there should be any thing of worth more in Christ than was in other persons and other things; *what is thy beloved?* they could not believe that he was any more than another tree, because he grew among them; and truly it's because men know not the worth of Christ and have no Esteem of him; they have not tasted and seen how good and gracious the Lord is, and therefore they have no high account of the precious fruit that growes on this tree. The carnal heart closeth with the world and closeth with his lusts; they are his *Dalilahs*, his Beloved: and when he looks upon a child of God, sees a gracious heart go lamenting after Christ, another that hath found Christ rejoyces in him, and solaceth himself in the fruit of this tree; Why, this is the wonder unto a carnal heart; *why? What's thy Beloved more than my Beloved?* what do you find more in Christ, than I find in the world, than I find in my lusts? Oh it's a dreadful deceit of a mans heart. *Can a man gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles?* Is it possible that the wild tree can bring forth as good fruit as the Apple-tree? No, it's the ignorance of men that they know not Christ; that Christ is not precious to them. But again,

5. Fifthly, This comparison holds forth the great sufferings of Christ: he is said to be the Apple-tree in the forest, or in the wood; because of the sufferings that Christ was exposed to when he was on earth. You know the trees in the forest, they lye open to the

Storms,

Storms, there's no fence about them, they lye open to the teeth and horns of the wild beasts; and thus did Christ suffer when he was upon earth: he laid open to most grievous Storms, to blow upon him: the very wrath of God his Father went over his head; it blew exceeding sore upon him, that it even brake his tree to pieces. *It pleased the Father to bruise him, Isaiah* 53. 10. It pleased the father to bruise him and to put him to grief; yea it pleased the father to break him in pieces. Moreover he met with a world of sufferings from men: Oh how was he persecuted from first to last? How many *Psalms* are there in which *David* doth complain in the person of Christ? He complains of the wild beasts in the forest, the Dogs, the Lyons, the Unicorns, and the wild Buls of *Bashan* incompassed him round about, *Psalm* 22. 20, 21. *Deliver my soul from the sword: my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the Lyons mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.* And in divers other *Psalms* which he made of Christ, and in divers other respects, Christ is compared to a tree, a tree of the forest. Again,

6. Sixthly, He is a tree in the forest, an Apple-tree in the forest, for that *unexpected comfort and relief* that the Lord Jesus doth afford for poor souls: *unexpected comfort and relief*; when a man hath been travelling all the day long in a forest or wood, hungry and dry and thirsty, he casts his eye upon a well laden Apple-tree full of goodly fruit, Oh how welcome is it, and so much the more welcome, because he did not expect to find such a tree there: and so it is with poor creatures: how many are there wandering up and down in the world, hungry and thirsty and ready to faint, then doth Christ step in seasonably, then doth Christ present himself unto poor souls as an Apple-tree laden with

with delightful fruit; he sayes, Poor soul, thou shalt not famish, I will not suffer thee to famish; come take and eat of my fruit, and let thy soul for ever be satisfied in me. Now the unexpectedness of the mercy doth heighten the mercy. I had thought I should never have seen thy face, says *Jacob* to *Joseph*, and now God hath shewed it to me. Surely. *Hagar* was mightily taken with that fountain or well that was shewen to her in the wilderness, when she was ready to perish, when she had given over her child for lost, and there was no water to give; then for the well to be shewen her, surely this was a very welcome thing to her: and so when the soul is ready to faint, how often doth Christ present himself, as a well in the wilderness, and as an Apple-tree in the midst of the wood or forest; and how pleasant and comfortable is that? But again,

7. Seventhly, In the next place, He is said to be an Apple-tree among the Trees of the wood, because of the freeness of Christ: it holds forth much of the freeness of Christ in bestowing of himself upon poor creatures; an Apple-tree among the Trees of the wood, that's free for every man, for every man to take of, and eat of: If an Apple-tree be in a garden or an Orchard, a man may see it a great way off, and can't taste of it; he may desire it, and his stomach may be for it, but he despairs of it, because it's none of his: but an Apple-tree in a wood, that's free for all, for all that pass by; there's none excluded; but he that wants may go and take and eat of the fruit of it. It holds forth much of the fruit of Christs love, he is not only an Apple-tree in the wood, but he is an Apple-tree in the forest: and therefore those tenders of grace that are held forth, *Isaiah* 55. 1, 2, 3. See there what invitation is made; *Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye,*

ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price, &c. yea though a man has no money, yet he may come and drink of this water, and eat of the fruit of this Tree. That's a seventh particular.

8 Eightly, But again, in the Eighth place, Christ is said to be a Tree among the Trees of the wood, Because there are very few that go forth to seek Christ, and few there are that find him, and feed upon him by faith. An Apple-tree that is in the midst of the forest, how few are there that feed on that Tree? It may be God by a special providence directs a poor, weary, hungry traveller, a weary man to that Tree; but how few are there that go to seek it! Men that have an Orchard at home, will hardly go to the wood. Men that have Orchards of their own, Trees growing at home, they will not go abroad: they which were invited to the feast, you know they would not come, they had enough, they had no need of Christ as they thought; and therefore they would take no pains, The Lord by his special grace must direct the poor soul to Christ, or else it's impossible they should come to him: indeed men will not come to Christ; *ye will not come to me*, sayes Christ, *that I may give you life.* In all these respects Christ is said here to be an Apple-tree, among the Trees of the wood: And therefore to conclude with one word of Application.

Use. This lets us see the usefulness and desirableness of Jesus Christ: What's more useful and desirable in your Orchard, than the Apple-tree? If a man hath never so many Trees in his Orchard, he never thinks his Orchard compleat, except he hath some Apple-trees. Oh that the Lord would perswade your hearts, to look unto the Apple-tree,

ple-tree, look to get the Apple-tree into your Orchard; get Christ into your hearts. Oh he is an useful and desirable Tree. Let me tell you the benefit of it in a word or two.

It will be a comfortable *shelter* to you. The Apple-tree that is Planted in your Orchard, it will keep off a storm from your house. Christ in the heart is a comfortable shelter to the poor soul. Oh how many a storm of wrath and indignation, which blowes from Heaven, and Christ keeps it off from the poor Soul!

Nay again, Let me tell you that this Apple-tree it's a *Tree of Life*; and therefore worth the seeking after, that you may get him planted in your garden. I say it's a Tree of Life, whosoever eats of this Tree lives for ever. *Your fathers they did eat Manna in the wilderness*, sayes Christ, *and they are dead*, John 6. 58. *but he that eats of the bread that I shall give him, shall never die*, sayes he, *he shall live for ever*: it must needs be so, for Christ he is a Tree of Life.

Again, He is not only a Tree of Life, but he is a *Tree of knowledge*: and therefore worth the seeking after. You read in *Genesis* 3. of the *Tree of knowledge* that was in the midst of the garden, which the woman lookt upon: and it was very desirable for three things. 6. vers. *The woman saw, that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband.* Truly all this is to be found in Christ; he is good for food ye heard before, they that eat of him, shall live for ever. He is pleasant to the eye; Oh how beautiful is he in his Nature, and in his person! *thou art fairer than the Children of men*: and he is desirable

sirable to make one wise; he that feeds upon Christ is made wise indeed; he that knows Christ, is the wisest man in the world; it's Christ that opens the eye: the eating of Christ, this Tree, opens the eyes and makes men wise, wise to salvation, wise to know and understand the great mysteries of God in Christ, even those mysteries hid from ages and generations. Again, I might tell you, This Tree, it *brings forth fruit at all times*, and therefore desirable; the Apple-trees in your gardens and Orchards, they wo'nt bring forth fruit in winter; but this Apple-tree, Christ, every Month in the year, every Summer and winter, every day of the Month: look upon Christ with an eye of Faith, and you shall find him full laden with fruit. Oh how useful a tree is Christ! Again.

I might tell you also, here you might have a staff to lean on, upon this Tree you might have a staff to lean on; *I am thy God to old age.* The waters that the Children of *Israel* drank of, were bitter till such time as *Moses* cut down boughs, and they made the waters sweet; such boughs grow upon this Apple-tree; it will make your bitter waters sweet. Oh there is love in Christ, there is goodness in Christ, and precious Promises, which if cast into those bitter waters, afflictions, the sorest bittereſt afflictions, these boughs will make them sweet. Get into this Apple-tree. Why do you endeavour to get Bryars and Thorns, and Oaks and wild Trees and Crab-trees, and in the mean time neglect this Apple-tree? there is a Curse upon the ground and on every soul, even the curse of the ground, thorns and thistles, and these here will grow, till such time as Christ be planted: Nay, if Christ be not planted in the garden, God the Father can't walk there; If the Tree of Life be not there, if the Tree of Knowledge be not there, God takes no delight to walk in the garden. The soul

out of Christ, where Christ is not planted, that soul can have no gracious and sweet communion with him? Well then,

What an Invitation is here for poor souls to come in to Christ? Christ is the Apple-tree, an Apple-tree in the midst of the trees of the wood: Oh! why will men reject Christ? Poor sinners, why are you fearful through unbelief, to come to Christ? If Christ were a bryar or thorn or thistle, you might be afraid of him; but he is as the Apple-tree among the Trees of the wood; he is laden with fruitful branches; if Christ were a Tree hemmed in, walled in, you might despair of having any fruit, but he is open to you: whoever thirsts let him come, who ever hungers let him come, take and eat of this fruit. Poor souls you have the leave of God, nay, you have not only leave, but you have command to come and eat of this Tree of life: it's the commandment, that you come and believe in Jesus Christ. Oh what straggling and perverse hearts lodge in our bosoms! There was a time when God said *of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, Thou shalt not eat of* it, and then man would eat; and now the Lord hath set up another tree of life, and the Lord sayes, Thou shall eat of this tree of Life, and now they will not, though the eating then, and the not eating now is like to cost many thousand souls lives. The Lord help you to consider of it!

SER-

SERMON III.

CANT. 2. 3.

As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons: I sat down under His Shadow with great delight, and His Fruit was sweet to my Taste.

I Told you before, here is a twofold comparison, the sons of men are compared to the *Trees of the wood*, the Trees of the forest, which are wild Trees, which hold forth the state of all men by Nature; we have done with that.

The second is, The son of God is compared to the *Apple-tree* among those Trees. I shewed you in what respect Christ is compared to the *Apple-tree*; and the last day I shewed why Christ is said to be as the *Apple-tree among the Trees of the wood*: why not an Apple-tree among the Trees of the Garden, but as the Apple-tree among the Trees of the wood.

Use 1. First, let such as profess the name of Christ, be like unto Christ. That's the use of the point I shall make at this time. They that profess Christ must be like Christ. Labour to be fruitful Trees, fruit-bearing trees; and look that your fruit be of this Apple-

Apple-tree, and bring forth much of this fruit, as Christ did: yea be like unto Christ in being Apple-trees in the midst of the wood. To this head I shall reduce all that I shall press upon you at this time.

First of all, Christians should labour to be fruit-bearing trees: the Lord Jesus Christ would rather be set forth by a fruit-bearing tree, than by a tree of strength, or a tree of tallness; not the Oak or the Cedar, but the Apple-tree, and that because it's a fruit-bearing tree. Oh how should Christians labour to be fruitful in their place! it's better to be serviceable to God and man, in your place and Generation, and relation, than to have places, titles, honours and dignities amongst the great ones of the world: and Christians should rather choose to be serviceable to God and man, than to seek great things for themselves in the world: there's a notable parable in *Judges* 9. 8. *The trees went forth on a time to anoint a King ovir them, and they said unto the Olive-tree, Reign thou over us. But the Olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?* There was a particular application of the parable: the Sons of *Gedeon* chose rather to be useful in *Israel*, than to be honourable in *Israel*: it holds forth thus much in general, a gracious heart will rather choose a place of service than a place of honour; *I will not leave my goodness, my sweetness and my fatness*, sayes the Olive-tree, fig-tree and the vine: no though to be promoted over and beyond other trees: consider that it is the greatest Commendation of a Christian to be a serviceable and fruit-bearing tree; I say it is the greatest commendation unto men that they are serviceable unto God in their place and generation: look

unto *David*, in *Act.* 13. see what a special commendation God gives of him, *v.* 36. *after he had served his own generation, by the will of God he then fell asleep:* it was the greatest commendation that God could give *David*, when he would speak honourably of *David*; when *David* is gone, this was his commendation, he served his generation, he was a fruit-bearing tree, he served his generation according to the will of God; He sought the glory of God, he laboured to do good to the sons of men whilst he was here upon earth; and so *David served his generation*: Brethren, it's no commendation for a man to live long, if he don't serve his generation; It's no commendation for a tree to stand a hundred years, if it ben't a fruitful Tree: Let us see,

1. First of all wherein God begins to commend *David*; he begins at the service of his Generation: as if God did not take notice of other time that men spend, in which there is no service done to him; he doth not say after he had lived so long, or after he had served so long, but *after he had served his generation according to the will of God*; A man may live a hundred years upon earth, and may stand so long, and yet be an accursed tree all the time of his standing, if he be not a fruitful tree, and a tree doing some good for his generation wherein he lives: you may see the prophecie of the Prophet *Isaiah*, 65. 20. *But the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed*: so that it is not simply a blessing to live long, to stand long, if a man be not a fruitful Tree; for a man may stand a hundred years, sayes the Scripture, and yet all that time be under a curse. Again,

2. Secondly, I beseech you remember that you have the example of Christ: you have the example of Christ and

of

of his people before you, who are all trees of righteousness, fruit-bearing trees: What abundance of fruit did Christ bring forth to his Father, when he was upon earth? Every bough and every branch be full of precious fruit. To see *the Glory of the only begotten Son full of grace and truth.* See Rev. 22. what is spoken there of this fruitful tree; and it's Christ that is this tree, the tree of life. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the tree of Life.* Oh what a fruitful tree is this tree of Life! He brings forth fruit every Month; continually full of fruit, and all that was in Christ was useful; the very leaves are good, the very leaves of this tree of Life were good. Oh the precious balm that dropt from the leaves of this tree of life, into poor afflicted and wounded Souls! The *very leaves of it were good for the healing of the Nations*: And it was *Jobs* commendation, and it was also his comfort, when the hand of the Lord was upon him, that he brought forth fruit, that he was a fruit-bearing tree, *Job* 29. 11. *When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me:* and as the ear and eye blessed him, so the loins blessed him, *Job* 31. 20. *the loins of the Poor blessed him*, that he warmed and that he refreshed: So that this was a great comfort unto *Job*, in the day of his distress, when all his friends upbraided him with hypocrisie, he knew that grace would uphold him, he was not an unfruitful tree, but was still serviceable in the place and relation God had set him.

3. Thirdly, Nay let me further tell you, that if Christians be not fruit-bearing trees, they are a dishonour to Christ; it's a dishonour to the very root they profess they are engrafted upon. When you come to a tree whose branches are dead and withered, and

you see there is no fruit upon it, you will complain presently, and say there is some fault in the root; the fruit is dry and withered, the unfruitful branches are a dishonour to the root. Unfruitful Christians are a dishonour to Christ. Oh! What will the world say, when they come to look upon Christians, when they see they are dry, withered, and fruitless, and there is no more to be seen in them than in others? What sayes the world? why, the blame is cast upon their head, the root: these are the Christians, these are the professors. Oh wherein do men take occasion? Oh give no just occasion for men to speak dishonourably of Christ whom you profess.

4. Fourthly, Again it's the dishonour of the husbandman to have an unfruitful tree, *Joh.* 15. 1. *I am the vine, and my Father is the Husbandman: every branch in me that beareth no fruit, he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit:* and so when the Gardener, the Husbandman, shall let a tree stand forty years, and be unfruitful, this man will be accounted unskilful in his Vineyard: Why, so if the Lord should let such trees to stand forty, fifty or a hundred years, and no fruit brought to him, it's a great dishonour to the husbandman.

2. Secondly, Therefore again secondly, Christians should look that their fruit be the fruit of the Apple-tree, be like to Christ: in this, he was as the Apple-tree among the trees of the wood: You know the Apple-tree is known by the smoothness of the branches; it's not full of pricks and Thorns, as many other trees are; It will not scratch, it will not tear or rend, as others will, though men break the branches, and spoil them, yet it doth not tear or rend them: and truly thus was *Christ*, and thus it becomes

comes Christians to be; He was no thorn, he was beset with thorns, *Isaiah* 53. 7. *he was oppressed, he was dumb, he opened not his mouth: as a Sheep that is dumb before his shearer:* he did not revile, he did not render reviling for reviling, he did not reproach, and the smoaking flax he did not quench, nor break the bruised reed, he did not strive, he did not cry, his voice was not heard in the streets; and thus was Christ, and thus it becomes Christians. Christians should not tear and rend; they should not bear pricking thorns; they should not render evil for evil, they should not pour forth expressions of hatred, envy and wrath. This is for the bryar and the thorn; this is not for the Apple-tree. If you be Apple-trees, be like to Christ in this. But,

3. Thirdly, Again the Apple-tree is known by the fruit. There's a great deal of fruit that is like the fruit of the Apple-tree, that is not known till such time as men come to taste it. It's possible that a wild tree may be as fair and as beautiful as the Apple-tree; but when you come to taste it, you will distinguish the fruit of the wild tree; the Crab-tree, it's sowr, it's bitter; the fruit of the Apple-tree is sweet and pleasant. Brethren, know, God doth examine all your fruit and all the Apples, and God doth taste every fruit,

First of all, by the Principle, and secondly, by mens End.

1. First of all, The Lord doth taste mens fruit by their principle; he examines from whence men brought forth their fruit, whence came their fruitfulness: he examines whether they were grafted upon a good stock or no; the Lord knows it I say by the taste: when you take a twig, or cyon and graft it on an Elder, or some other tree that hath an ill

taste, the fruit will taste as the tree is: If it be engrafted upon a good stock, the fruit will be good; the Lord will examine every mans stock, whether he be engrafted on Christ or on himself. See *Hosea* 14. 8. *I am like a green firr tree* (the words of Christ) *and from me is all thy fruit found.* That's good fruit that grows upon Christ, that comes from Christ, that tastes of Christ.

Object. But you will say, *When doth a mans fruit taste of Christ?*

Answ. 1. First of all; When the Soul is still labouring to get out of it self, is still emptying it self, getting out of himself: when a man doth all that he can do, and yet looks upon himself as vile, and wretched, abhorring himself in dust and ashes; when he continually sayes, there is nothing at all in him that is good. The Apostle *Paul* sayes it: that is his expression, and it was the expression of a gracious heart, *Rom.* 7. 18. *For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.* When the Soul is thus taken up (with *Paul*) emptying it self, and looking upon it self as a poor vile, weak, wretched creature, utterly unable to do any thing in his own strength for God, and lying at the footstool of Christ, breathing and waiting; this fruit is not of himself, but it tastes of Christ. But again,

Answ. 2. Secondly, the fruit tastes of Christ, when as the soul doth all out of a principle of *Faith.* It works from a principle of faith: It hath seen the tenders of grace in the Gospel, how the Lord doth freely and graciously hold forth himself to poor lost sinners; and hath through the power of God made a close with his tender of grace, received it by faith, so that now this faith it works by love; and all that ever the Soul doth, it desires to do it out of love to God; when

when it comes thus from a principle of faith, it doth alway act by love, then the Soul tastes and feeds upon Christ. But again,

3. Thirdly, the Soul tastes of Christ, when it lives from a continual dependance on Christ; when the Soul goes only out to Christ for righteousness and strength and Salvation; when it goes out to Christ for all grace, strength and Holiness; for strength to perform every duty, and to bear every burden; and to walk wisely and graciously in every relation; when the Soul lyes breathing and waiting upon Christ (as the Poor man in the Gospel, who laid at the pool of *Bethesda*,) when the soul lies waiting for the movings of Christ, and is continually opening its savory affections to Christ; looks upon it self as a Ship at sea in a Calm, and is not able to stir, unless the wind move, unless the wind blow; I say when the soul doth thus act, this fruit tastes of Christ; and thus doth *Paul* professes that he lived in a continual dependance upon Christ, and that all that he did, it was not from himself or any thing of his own, but it was from Christ: See that place in the *Galatians* from which a gracious Spirit doth breath, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I am Crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the Life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* Here's a gracious expression, *I live*, sayes he, and *yet not I, it's Christ that lives in me.* When the soul can thus refer all to Christ, and sayes, I believe, and *it's not I but Christ that helps me*, and so *I obey, yet not I*, but it's the Spirit of Christ in me; and *I suffer, yet not I*, but Christ strengthening me; I pray and I perform duties, and yet not I, but it's the Spirit of Christ in me, that breaths in me; when the soul

thus goes out of it self, and depends upon Christ for all grace and strength, and all Holiness, as well as for life and Salvation, now doth the fruit of this Soul taste of Christ, God knows it, he tastes of Christ in it. But then again,

2 Secondly, As God doth taste of the principles of the Soul as by the Stock from whence it comes, so also by the ends of it. What's the end of a mans action, what is the end of that he doth for God, what is the end of his affections, of his forwardness, of his duties? the Lord judgeth of all the fruit by the ends of it; why, if the Glory of God be a mans end in all that he doth, this tastes of the fruit of Christ, of the fruit of the Apple-tree; but if a man aim at his own ends, if a man seek himself in all that he doth, it tastes strong of Self, and the Lord hath no delight in it; see what is said in *Hosea* 10. 1. *Israel is an emptie Vine*, and *yet he brings forth fruit*; how can these two stand together? he brings forth fruit, but he brings forth no good fruit, he is emptie because he is empty to God, he brings forth fruit and that fruit is emptie, it's *to himself*, and so emptie: and so God looks upon him as an emptie Vine; if a man bring forth never so much fruit, (it being to himself) it can't be called good, but seemless fruit, and all that fruit is lost, the Lord takes no delight in that fruit, it's not for Gods taste, when as it's not brought forth unto him.

Object. But you will say, when doth a man bring forth fruit to God? What are the ends that a man should propound to himself in all his actions to God, that makes his fruit to be good?

Answ. When the Soul doth all that it doth, that it may testifie its thankfulness that it owes to God for the great and wonderful salvation that comes in by Christ; when a man sayes, *I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of God*; When a man

man does all that he doth to testifie his Subjection to God, and only does all his works that he may honour and lift up Gods name in the world; that he may be serviceable and instrumental to do God service in his generation, when he makes this his end: when a man shall do all for this end, that God may reap the Glory, that God may eat of the fruit he hath planted, that God may not lose all his labour, and all his pains, and all his cost; that so he that hath planted the tree in his Orchard, may eat the fruit of it; so that when a man makes not himself the end, but God the sole end, this God tastes of as savourie, as a fruit savoury to himself. But again,

2. Secondly, Christians should labour to bring forth much of this fruit; a good tree brings forth much fruit: Oh how full was Christ! every bough was full of fruit: Therefore the people of God, they are compared unto trees that are planted by the rivers side, it's said, *they shall be as trees planted by the rivers of waters*: they are fruitful trees that are well watered, and so bring forth abundance of fruit; Oh Christians, remember this was the end of Christs coming, *that you may bring forth fruit, and bring forth abundance of fruit*; you should not only be trees, but bring forth abundance of fruit. *I came that you might have life; and that you might have it more abundantly*: See that promise and make much of it, *Psalm* 92. it's a gracious promise, and may tend through the blessing of God to quicken dead unfruitful hearts, *v.* 12, 13. *the righteous shall flourish like a Palm tree: he shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon; those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God, they shall bring forth fruit in old age: they shall be fat and flourishing*: it's a large promise, they shall be fat and flourishing, and

and they shall bring forth fruit in old age; therefore you that complain of the deadness, and unfruitfulness of your hearts, look to the promise, and say, Oh Lord I have a dead heart, my branches are withered, I even despair of bringing forth fruit to God; why, don't look to thy own deadness, look to the promise of God: it's said of *Abraham*, he had a dead body, or as good as dead in respect of begetting Children, *Rom.* 4. yet he lookt to the promise, *v.* 19, 20. *And being not weak in faith he considered not his own body now dead when he was about an hundred years old, neither the deadness of Sarahs womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in Faith giving glory to God*, he had a dead body, and yet his faith was revived: when he lookt to the promise of God, he was confident that God who had promised was able to perform: and thou that complainest of the deadness of thy heart, don't look upon thine own heart, but upon the promise, God will declare his faithfulness and whatsoever he hath promised he will fulfill it.

Object. But you will say, how should we believe it? we see the contrary: how is this promise made good that the righteous shall bring forth fruit in old age? don't we see many times how the best Christians decay in old age? which makes us even afraid to live to old age.

Answ. Certainly the promise of God is made good, they do flourish, and bring forth fruit in old age: an old Christian, though he may not bring forth so much of some fruit, yet he brings forth more of other fruit, than young Christians do; it may be there is not so much Zeal, nor so much activitie for God, ay, but there may be more rootedness, more stedfastness, more establishment of heart; the heart may be more rooted, more grounded upon him: this makes

the

the fruit the more savoury: the less of Self, and the more of Christ is in him, the more well pleasing is it to Gods taste. Now I say that old Christians (it's true) may decay in parts and gifts, in utterance and expression, and the like, and yet may not decay in grace: the inward man, the hidden man in the heart, that may wax strong, and be more fresh, green and fruitful.

2. Secondly, Again I say to this that young Christians may have more activitie, but old Christians may have more Skill, and therefore though they may not act as formerly, yet there may be abundance of Skill in holy things; as the wise man sayes, *remember thy creatour before old age comes*, before *the daughters of musick fall low*, before the voice is gone; he was able it may be to sing clear before, yet now he may have as much skill, and it may be more than ever though old; and so of an old Christian, this may be said, that young Christians may bring forth more fruit, but old Christians may bring forth sweeter fruit; it's so of older trees, they bring forth sweeter fruit, though not so much indeed as young trees: why, so, old Christians that hold fast in their Integritie, if they don't bring forth so much as the young tree, yet they bring forth sweeter and pleasanter fruit; and still the Lord is faithful in his promise, *the righteous bring forth fruit in old age*; and therefore look to the promise of the Lord, and let this promise strengthen your faith.

3. Thirdly, Again, Labour to grow up in grace: the Lord loves to walk in his Orchard, when there are fruitful trees he loves to bestow his pains upon them, he will hedge them, he will prune them, he will spare no cost on his fruitful trees; nay the Lord will not cut down his fruitful trees, here's great encouragement for Christians to bring forth much fruit

in

in their Generation : God doth spare those who bring forth much fruit : God gave command in the book of *Deuteronomie* when as they went out to war, *Deut.* 20. 19 *When thou shalt besiege a City a long time, in making war against it, to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof, by forcing an ax against them, for thou mayest eat of them.* For the trees of the Field might be imployed in the siege, the trees that brought forth no fruit, those trees should be cut down ; but those that bear fruit shall not (by Gods command) be cut down : you that are fruit-bearing trees, the Lord takes special care of you, the Lord will not cut down those trees: the husbandman he comes and looks on a branch, and sees no fruit, he is ready to cut it down ; ay, but if there comes one and spies a cluster on it, if it be but one cluster, don't cut it down, surely it is not dead, here is a cluster on it. Oh the grace and goodness of God towards his people, there is something of Christ found in such, and therefore Lord cut them not down ; thus mercy pleads : Well then, you that belong to Christ, bring forth much fruit. If you ask me how? I answer, look to God the great husbandman, he is such a husbandman as he knows how to make you fruitful : *Paul plants, and Apollo waters, but God gives the encrease* ; look to the Lord, be willing to submit unto God in whatsoever way God shall deal with you, be willing that the Husbandman should prune you, launce you, that he should cut off your unsound branches ; Submit unto Gods wayes of affliction, though they be never so hard, the Lord he can by them make you fruitful. The rain it makes wayes dirtie, but in time it makes grounds fruitful. The Lord he can make thy trees fruitful, and the herbs that he hath sowen and planted in thy heart fruitful : therefore

therefore submit unto Gods wayes, and get nigher to Christ as ever thou desirest to be fruitful; the branches that are nearest the root, those branches bring forth most fruit: Christ is the root, and you that are in Christ cleave more to him, and let your dependance be on him. The nigher you are to him, the more fruit you shall bring forth.

4. Fourthly, The fourth and last thing and I have done, Let Christians be like unto Christ in this, that they be Apple-trees in the midst of the wood. Christ he was an Apple-tree among bryars and thorns in the world, Oh that Christians would be like unto Christ in this: It was the great commendation of *Lot*, *Enoch*, *Moses*, *Josiah*, *David*, and others that lived in an evil age, yet their hearts were upright for God; and truly though their services be hard service, and though Gods people be in an evil world, yet in heaven they shall lift up God without opposition (and thought it be here with opposition, yet: still it makes the Name of God Glorious; to bring forth fruit when all the world is unfruitful, or hath nothing but wild fruit, this is their commendation. There are some professors, they will be Apple-trees among the Apple-trees, but when they are among the trees of the wood, then they'l be crab-trees; Christ though in the midst of the wood he was sweet and delightful fruit, though compassed about with sinners; well, look unto Christ to keep up your savoury fruit, that God may taste it, that you may still bring forth sweet and pleasant fruit, though compassed about with Wild trees. And so much for this time.

SER.

SERMON IV.

CANT. 2. 3.

I sat down under His Shadow with great delight, and His Fruit was sweet to my Taste.

YOu heard in the former part of the verse, that the Lord Jesus is compared to an Apple-tree in the midst of the trees of the wood; and I prest it upon you the last day, that you should be like unto Christ: Choose to be fruit-bearing trees; it's better to be a fruitful tree than to be a tall Cedar or a mighty Oak; I proceed to what remains.

You have heard of the tree: Now consider the two resemblances in which Christ is compared unto the Apple-tree. Here is a Specification, or an Illustration of the Simile. First, Here is an *Apple-tree* for the nature; And secondly, for the fruit: so that these words hold forth,

1. First, How Beneficial Christ was, and how Beneficial he is as he is a tree. And

2. Secondly, What use the believing soul makes of him.

First, He is beneficial for his shadow, that's delightful,

ful, a pleasant delightful shadow. Secondly, Then he is beneficial for his fruit, his fruit that is sweet also: now the use that the believing Soul makes of Christ is,

First, It sits down under his shadow: *I sat down under his shadow with great delight.* Secondly, It eats of his fruit; *His fruit was sweet to my taste*: So that both his shadow and his fruit is exceeding pleasant and delightful to the believing Soul.

The words have two several readings: Some read them thus. In his shadow I delight and sit down; I desired and sat down in his shadow: Or in his shadow I desired to sit; I desired that I might sit down, for the word signifies both desire and delight, now I take it so. I desired that I might sit down. It holds forth,

1. First, the *Vehemence* of affection which is in the believers heart to Christ, the mighty strong desire, the breathings and pantings, the desires of a gracious heart are carried out strongly after Christ; *Ps.* 42. 1, 2. they are the expressions of mighty strong desires, vehement desires after God: *as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so doth my Soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsts after God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God!* So, Isa. 64. 1. the Church expresses her strong desires after God; *Oh that thou wouldest rent the heavens and that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence:* the expressions of vehement desires after Christ, it's like the desire of a Servant, or labouring Man after the shadow, so *Job* expresses it, *Job* 7. 2. he sets down what desire the labouring man hath: *as a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as a hireling looketh for the reward of his work,* he thirsts after it, he breaths

breaths after it, when a man desires and breaths after a thing he draws in the air, he sucks and pants after it, such is the desire of a poor Soul.

2. It doth not hold forth only vehemence of desire, but it holds forth *constancy* of desire, *I desire that I may sit down*: she was sat, but she desired to sit still, I desire to sit longer and to continue under the shadow, as a man that sits under a shadowy place at ease, he is loth to be disturbed: *One thing have I desired of the Lord*, says *David*, *Psal.* 27. his desires were like unto the desires of the Spouse here; *v.* 4. one thing have I desired of the Lord, *and that will I seek after all the dayes of Life, to behold the beautie of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple: David* desired all his dayes to sit under the Ordinance, that he might behold the beautie of God.

I shall look towards the other reading, which is more known: I sat down under his shaddow with delight: Or I delighted and sat down under his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. She had a great delight; as her desires were strong, so her delight was good. When a Soul finds Christ, it alway finds a Sweetness in him, which is proportionable to all its desires: It's not so in the things of the world: a man may have strong desires after vanities and creature comforts, but when he enjoyes them, he can take no delight in them; but it is not so in the enjoyment of Christ, the delight is proportionable to the desire of the Soul; nay, it's more in Christ than it expected: it's able to say as the Queen of *Sheba* did of *Solomon*, I heard a great deal of thy wisdom, said she, *but the half was not told me*. I shall clear up two things in the words.

1. First, shew you what this shadow is that the spouse sat under.

Secondly,

2. Secondly, What is it to sit under this shadow?

1. First, What is the *shadow the Spouse sat under with so much delight?* they are either natural or metaphorical; you know what a natural shadow is, it's a darker or obscurer light which is caused by the Interposition of your body betwixt the eye and the sun, when the Trees or the Mountains stand betwixt you and the Sun, they cast a shadow towards you; now there are shadows of the night, and shadows of the day: indeed night is nothing else but a shadow, a great shadow, nothing but the shadow of the earth, the earth coming betwixt the Sun and us, therefore the shadow: the night, it's a privation of light, and therefore it's terrible, the shadows of the night are dreadful to nature because it's a privation of light: but the shadow of Christ is not the shadow of the night, for his shadow is no dreadful shadow, indeed it's like the shadow of the night for the largeness of it, because the shadow that Christ casts it reaches the whole earth over, it's a mighty large shadow, that thousands and ten thousands of poor weary souls may sit under, and so indeed it resembles the shadow of the night: but it's not the shadow of the night, it's a comfortable shadow, a delightful shadow, it's the shadow of the day, it's as the shadow of the trees, or as the shadow of a Rock in the midst of Summer: as you know they are exceeding pleasant and delightful. So then we shall enquire what is the use of these shadows, that we may see how useful Christ is to the Soul.

1. First of all, The use of the natural shadow it serves for Secrecy: If a man will hide himself, or retire himself, he will go among the shadows. A man that walks amongst the woods and shadows, he is not so easily found, as when he walks in the open field, and

no trees, and so nothing to shadow him; and therefore the Lord is said to shadow his people, *Isa.* 51. 16. I have put my word into thy mouth, and *covered thee in the shadow of my hand*, there I have hid thee, that thou mayst be safe: and thus Beloved is Christ a shadow: Christ is a shadow to his people in that he is their hiding-place, they are hid in Christ, their life is hid in Christ, and their comforts are all hid in Christ, they are hid from wrath, they are hid from displeasure, they are hid from enemies, they are hid from the power of temptation: and therefore God puts *Moses* into the Rock, when he would hide him, which rock was a type of Christ: the Soul that is in Christ it lies in the rock, it lies in the clefts of the Rock, it's in Christ that the soul enjoyes sweet Communion with God, it retires it self and hides it self in Christ, and converses sweetly with the Almighty.

2. Secondly, As the shadow is a place for secrecy, so a place for *rest*; I say it's a place for rest: When a man, a labouring man in the field, desires to sit down, he will sit down under a shadow; the expression of *Job* before, as the servant earnestly *desires the shadow*; why wherefore does he desire the shadow, but that he might *sit down* and *rest*? there is nothing so welcome to him as a shadow, a shadowy place where he may sit down and rest: In this respect Christ is a shadow to his people, he is a sweet resting-place: it's not possible the soul should rest but in Christ, it never finds rest till it come to Christ: therefore he calls, *Math.* 11. 28. poor laden Souls, such as are weary and tired, and have spent their labour and strength in vain; Come to me, sayes he, you that are weary and heavie laden, and *I will give you rest*: the Soul does never rest sweetly till it come down and rest sweetly under Christ.

3. Thirdly, Again, a shadow it's a place of *coolness* and

and of *refreshment*, it's a defence against the heat: if a man desire to walk in the height of Summer, he will walk in the shadow; thus is Christ to his people. You shall see what is said in that *Isa.* 32. 2. And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, as a covert from the tempest, as a river of water in a dry place, *as the shadow of a great rock in a weary Land: as the shadow of a great rock*, which keeps off the heat and the scorching of the Sun; and thus is Christ to a poor Soul, a poor fainting Soul, that is scorched with the heat and displeasure of the Lord, why there is no sitting down but under Christ. When the Soul sits down under wrath and displeasure, he makes every place too hot, and every condition too hot, and there is no sitting down under any creature comfort; a man can't sit down under the shadow of any creature, or under the shadow of himself, or under the shadow of his own righteousness, the Sun of wrath will be too hot for him, he will soon set all the straw and stubble on fire, there is no rest there, and it can't sit down untill it come to Christ.

4. Fourthly, Again, To sit down with Christ there is Contemplation and Meditation; for a man to exercise his thoughts and meditation he will choose a shadowy place: the Lord Christ he is thus a shadow. When the Soul sits under Christ, it may contemplate the glory of God that is in Christ. God reveals precious things, excellent things to his people, such as eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor the heart of man can conceive; the soul sits down under Christ, and it gains more of the knowledge of God in one day, than in many years: all the knowledge that God gives of himself, it's in, and through Christ. God gives knowledge, sayes the Apostle, but *it's in the Face of Jesus Christ*. I say whilst the Soul sits

under Christ, it's under a shadow, and it may contemplate on the great things of the Kingdom of God, and is learnt to know that which is hid from the wise and prudent of the world. Again,

5. Fifthly, We are wont to use the shadow for a place of refreshing our selves, eating and drinking under it. It was usual among the Patriarchs in those hot contryes: the Angels when they came to *Abraham*, he desired them to sit under a tree, and made provision ready, and there they did eat; and thus is Christ useful unto his people, whilst they sit under Christ, they feed upon precious fruit; I sat under his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste, under God in Christ. God doth make a sweet Banquet for the Soul, and the soul, though it enjoys many promises, and never so many precious ordinances, yet unless the soul sits under the shadow of Christ, it can't feed upon them, it can take no delight in them. If a man have never so good meat, in the height of Summer, if he hath no shadow to keep off the Scorching beams of the Son, he can't eat his meat with delight. So the soul if it looks not upon God in Christ, as he is a shadow to him, it can't partake of any of that daintie with delight.

6. Sixthly, Again, You know a man can't look upon the beautie and light of the Sun with ease, it is so Glorious as it spoils the sense: but if a man look through the trees, or the shade he may see the sun: and thus the Lord he doth cause the Soul to see Christ, and thus the soul it beholds his Glory; *Thou canst not see my face and live.* But thus I will do, I will put thee in the Rock, and so thou shalt see some glimpse of Glory. It's in and through Christ that the Soul sees something of God, for he could not else behold his Glory, for our God is a consuming fire; thus you see

see what the natural shadow is, so is Christ.

2. Secondly, There are Metaphorical shadows: shadow in Scripture is taken in a Metaphorical sence: the shadow is taken for a *defence*; as they that sit under protection, are said to sit under a shadow. So *Isa.* 30. 1, 2, 3. Wo to the rebellious Children, saith the Lord, that take counsel but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go down into *Egypt*, and have not asked at my mouth, to strengthen themselves in the strength of *Pharaoh*, and to trust in the *shadow of Egypt*. Therefore shall the strength of *Pharaoh* be your shame; and the trust *in the shadow of Egypt your confusion*. God pronounceth wo to them that run down to *Egypt*; you see there that strength and shadow is all one, they trust in the strength of *Egypt*: under the shadow of *Egypt*, that is the strength of *Egypt*. They thought that *Egypt* should have been their protection: so *Psa.* 17. when *David* prayes that the Lord would protect him, he prays that the Lord would be a *shadow* to him; there protection and shadow is all one. Verse 8. keep me as the Apple of thine eye, *hide me under the shadow of thy Wings*: Now if you take shadow in this Metaphorical sence, for *defence* and protection, it's very evident that Christ is thus a shadow unto his people, he is their defence and protection: It's he that defends them from the wrath of God, and it's he that defends them from the wrath of man. It's said of some trees, the Laurel tree and some other, they are a defence unto men in a tempest of thunder and Lightening. However it's true of Christ, He that sits under Christ, he is a defence from thunder and lightening, from the wrath of God, and that Soul that stands under him he is safe and well protected.

And as he is a defence to man from the wrath of God, so he is a defence from the wrath of man; *Isa.* 4. 6. *And there shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat; and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.* The Lord Christ promiseth protection unto his people in the day time, when it's never so hot, when the wrath of man is fierce and cruel: and there is a like promise in the 25. of the same prophecie, 4. verse, For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needie in his distress, *a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,* &c. the Lord Christ he is such a shadow, such a protection to his people against the heat and tempest of all wrathfull ones.

2. Secondly, Again, A shadow in the Metaphorical sense, it signifies *afflictions* and sorrows, and sometimes *Death* it self, because they are privations of comfort, even as the shadow is a privation of light, and these may be called Christs shadows: the sufferings of Christ are Christs shadows: It was the sufferings of Christ that did eclipse his glory when he was here upon earth: now all these shadows these sufferings of Christ, though they were dreadful shadows to him, yet they are comfortable shadows to his people from first to last; all the sufferings of Christ are comfortable shadows to his people. He sat under them with abundance of grief and dolour, that so his people might sit under him with abundance of joy and peace and comfort; his temptations were all sore griefs. Oh what a day of temptation was it to him? And yet how comfortable were these sufferings unto his people? Afflictions, even Death it self, was a shadow to Christ, and what a comfortable refreshing was it to his people! When Christ was upon the Cross he cast a great shadow,

dow, and what comfortable refreshment is it for poor weary Souls to sit under it?

3. Again, Thirdly, The shadow in a Metaphorical sence in Scripture is a dark representation of a thing; that which doth represent a thing, it's called the shadow of it; as you know the types and Ceremonies and the whole Levitical Law, they did hold forth something of Christ, and therefore all those ceremonies and types they were *shadows of things to come*, and so the Apostle speaks of all those ceremonial things, they were the *shadow*, but the body is Christ. So then whatever it is that holds forth Christ, whatsoever it is that represents Christ to the soul, that may be called a shadow, the shadow of Christ under which the Soul sits down, which the Soul takes delight in. As all the Ordinances of Christ they hold forth something of Christ; as a mans picture is called a shadow; the ordinances, they hold forth Christ, there's the shadow of Christ in them. The word holds forth something of Christ, and so the Sacrament, and so the fellowship of the saints, there's something of Christ to be found in all these, to be seen and enjoyed in all these: this also is one of the shadows of Christ that a gracious heart desires to sit under; where ever it sees any thing of Christ, in any word, any Ordinance, in any Communion of saints, there it takes delight, it blesses God for such communications of himself, and there it sits down, desiring with all faithfulness to wait upon God in them, that it may see more of Christ until such time as the day shall break and the shadows may flie away. Thus you may see what this shadow is that the believing soul desires to sit under, and how Christ is likened and set forth by the Natural and Metaphorical shadow.

Quest. But you will say in the next place, *What is it to sit down under this shadow?*

Answ. First of all, It's a *Posture of rest*, as walking is a moving posture, so sitting is a posture of rest; It holds forth, the soul is in a restless condition, till such time as it comes to Christ, there is no rest till such time as it pitches upon Christ: what sayes *David*, in that *Psalm*, he speaks unto his Soul there, when he desired that he might return to his rest, *Psalm* 116. 7. *Now Oh my soul return unto thy rest*, for the Lord he hath dealt bountifully with me: he had been wandring abroad in the world, and he found no rest there, he returns to God as to his resting-place, and *now Oh my soul return unto thy rest.*

2. Again, Secondly, it's *a rest with Confidence*; as it's a resting Posture, so it's *a Confident Posture.* A man will not sit down in a place of danger, if he sees danger he will not sit down: If a man be in such a place as he fears wild beasts or thieves, he will not sit down: why, when a man sits it's a confident Posture; to sit down with Christ, it's a confident Posture, it's to trust in Christ, when the soul layes all its weight upon Christ, when it looks to the power, goodness and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus, held forth in the promise, there it sits and ventures it self upon him, and saith with the Apostle, I know in whom I have trusted, and believed, and *he is able to keep what I have committed to his trust.*

3. Thirdly, Again, sitting it's a posture of *stedfastness*: when a man leans or rests upon another he is ready to fall down, but this holds forth the stedfastness of the souls condition in Christ. Oh then it's not possible the Soul should fall; he may be moved, but he shall not be greatly moved; he may be moved

moved so as not to be removed ; *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*, nay twice he hath made this promise, *that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against his people.*

4. Again, Fourthly and lastly, This posture doth relate to *continuance and abiding* ; and therefore that eternity of enjoyment of Christ is set down with that eternity of rest with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom of God. If a man sit down, he will make some stay, it holds forth a continuance, or abiding of the soul with Christ, there it resolves to stay, there it resolves to take up ; as the Lord sayes unto his people, *here shall be my rest for ever* ; so says the soul, Lord here I will rest, here I will abide and continue for ever. Well then, to conclude all with a word of Application.

1. *Use.* First of all, it lets us see, whatsoever is in Christ is useful and delightful. Every passage of the life of Christ, yea all the sufferings of Christ, from first to last, how useful are they to the Saints, and how comfortable when they are improved by faith ? Not only the fruit of the Tree is good, but the shadow of the Tree is good, the very shadow of Christ is good, the sufferings of Christ, the very death of Christ is exceeding useful and delightful, when the Soul delights in it : Oh how delightful is the Glory of Christ !

2. *Use.* But in a word I beseech you sit down under Christs shadow, let not any Poor creature sit down under any other shadow but the shadow of Christ. Make haste, poor weary Souls, you that have toyled your selves, and laboured in vain, have sought for righteousnes and consolation in your selves, Oh that you would not think of sitting down under these shadows: But make haste to Christ, get out of your selves and

sit

sit under his shadow. Let me tell you if you be not under this shadow of Christ, you are under the shadow of death; It's said of Christ before he came into the Land of *Napthali*, they sat down under the region *and shadow of Death*: so Poor Souls, if you sit not under Christs shadow, you sit under the very region of the shadow of death.

Nay, let me tell you further that it's not possible you should find rest, but only under this shadow; there is no creature can shadow you: the shadow of your own righteousness and your own works is too short to comfort you, and the shadow of all the works that men do enjoy they are too short. A man may solace himself under the shadow of the creature for a time, these shadows are too short when the Sun gets up to the height of it's beauty, and you have most need of shadow you can't have it. Poor Souls, when you have most need of cool refreshing shadows, these shadows goe quite away; so that I say it's not possible that you should rest sweetly and securely under any other shadows but the shadow of Christ, it's not possible ye should hold out in the time of trial: you read of the stony ground in *Math.* 13. the corn that was sown upon it, when it came up, the Sun did arise, and though it did spring up, yet anon it withered, there was no root, and so it died: if Christ had been their shadow he could have helpt it, but when the wrath of man was furious he could not stand long, but withered, because he had not depth of root: Oh what a sweet refreshing shadow is Christ! if he do overshadow the Soul, it may stand in any place, in any condition, though times of Persecution be never so hot. You know Christ was a shadow in the fiery furnace, a sweet refreshing

shadow

shadow to the three Children, there he kept off the heat.

Nay, Consider further, all the shadows besides Christ are perishing, they are vanishing shadows; they are truly compared unto shadows; man walks in a vain shadow; whatever any man sits down under, he sits under a vain shadow, it flyes away presently: you know the Prophet says, all flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower in the field, and what man would sit down under the shadow of grass? it's soon withered, and then the shadow is gone. What man will sit down under withering comforts? they are cut down in a moment: and what are these shadows? All creature comforts are like the shadow of *Jonahs* Gourd, it was a good refreshing shadow while he had it, but the Lord prepared a worm, and it did eat the Gourd before the Morning, and when the Sun did arise it did scorch the head of *Jonah*, and made him faint and sick: why, so the Lord he doth serve Poor creatures like *Jonah*, when the creature is gone and the shadow is gone, when a man apprehends the wrath of the Lord, and the displeasure of God, he hath nothing to shadow it; Oh what a hard affliction is this! what dangerous shadows are creature comfort to sit down under, which are prickling thorns and brambles? A man to sit down under thorns when he might as well sit down under the Apple-tree: all creature comforts when a man sits down under them, if trusted in, they will prove tearing thorns, pricking thorns, and nothing but sorrow in them; now Christ he is a shadow wherein you may rest, you may rest upon Chrirst and lean upon Christ, and he is of Infinite sweet refreshing

and

and support unto his people : take heed I say that you sit not down under the shadow of any creature comfort, but under Christ, and then this will follow, you shall sit down under him with sweet delight, and shall eat of his fruit, and this fruit will be sweet to your taste. But so much for this time.

SER-

SERMON V.

CANT. 2. 3.

I sat under his shaaow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

I Gave you the several readings of the verse: In his shadow I desired and sat, so some say; in his shadow I desired that I might sit: others thus, In his shadow I delighted and sat down; I have delighted. I come to the Application.

A word of Instruction. You see that every thing that is in Christ is very useful; not so much as the shadow of Christ is useless: and if the shadow be so useful and desirable, what is the tree it self, and what is the fruit that this tree brings forth? And if so, then by way of caution, I say, take heed of sitting under the shadow of any one creature comfort. He that is not under the shadow of Christ, he is under the shadow of Death. It's a poor shadow that all creature comforts afford, it's a shadow that will not continue when the Sun shall break forth at noon day. You know the natural shadow it goes up when the Son is at the highest, and when men have most need of the shadow, the shadow goes up, and thus is the shadow of all

creature

creature comforts: in times of affliction, in times of distress when men have most need of them, then the shadow of creature comforts leaves them; but now Christs shadow it's always refreshing, it continues even at noon day, he makes his flock to rest at noon day. It's not possible for the Soul to hold out in time of persecution, if it sits not under Christs shadow: the stony ground is soon withered, why, because Christ did not overshadow it. Well then, I shall proceed to an use of Exhortation, and that is

Use. First, To speak to such as are strangers to Christ, to such as for the present sit under the shadow of Death, and under the shadow of Hell and destruction. Oh that the Lord would perswade your hearts to come and sit under the shadow of Christ! Poor sinners, you that are working the works of the Devil, you that are drudges to Satan, and your lusts, the base lusts of your own hearts, you that have a long time wearied your selves in the service of sin, and spent your labour as the Prophet speaks, for that which cannot satisfie; Oh that you would not be content to be perpetual drudges to Satan. The Devil hath been willing to make you drudges, be not you willing to make your selves everlasting drudges; Oh bethink of some resting-place where you may sit down and rest from this labour, from this bondage of Satan; it may be whilst you are under the pursuit of sin, you are not sensible of it, you are not sensible of those labours, pains and travails of the Soul. It fares with the poor sinner as it fairs with a labouring man or a servant that is over-wrought; it may be (especially if he be used to it) he feels it not whilst he is in it, he feels not the ach, nor the evil of it; but when the evening comes, when he lies down for rest, he feels then the fruit of his former labour and travail in his bones; and

truly

truly so it is with many a sinner, whilst they are in the pursuit of sin, they feel not the pain, they feel not the ach, ay but the time is coming, the evening is coming, the night is coming, when they must lie down, when they can no longer go on, when they must whether they will or no rest from that Labour; then certainly they will find and feel the smart of their former drudgery and bondage in their Spirit: Our Lord Jesus made that an argument, *John* 9. 4. *I must work the works of him that sent me whilst it's day: The night cometh when no man can work*; but let me say the contrary to you, Oh don't work the works of Satan whilst it's day, do not work the works of sin all the day long, the night comes when you must cease the labour of sin, and then of a certain you will feel the smart of your pains and former services in sin; Oh then that the Lord would help you to consider when you shall have a resting place, when you shall sit down and rest your Souls, before the strength of your Spirits be spent in the labour of sin: Let me speak this word in your ear and tell you, the Lord Jesus is willing that you should sit down under his shadow, here's a sweet cool refreshing resting-place for you to take up in: And let me say further for your incouragement to come under this shadow,

That the Lord Jesus, he will keep you for the future; he will be a defence to you, that your old Master shall not take you away again, and the Soul whom Christ hath taken to himself is free from the bondage of sin, and if the Son make you free you shall be free indeed: if you sit under any shadow but Christ, the Devil, your lusts and your own hearts will fetch you back again: it may be you have sat down under your good works, vows, resolutions, humiliations

liations and repentances, and the like, yet notwithstanding all this, the Devil and the corruption of your own hearts have fetcht you back again to the old slavery, and to the old bondage. Oh that you would trust this shadow of Christ, this is such a shadow as Satan dare not come nigh; it's the shadow of the day, it's not the shadow of the night, it's such a shadow as is dreadful unto the powers of darkness. *What have we to do with thee*, saith the unclean Spirit, *thou art the son of the living God*; of a certain Christ will be a defence unto you, and a protection, and you shall not sit under your former slaverie and bondage, if once you sit under his shadow; Oh then that you would not toil your Spirits in the service of sin and Satan: Oh what a racking of the conscience and soul have poor sinners in the Service of Satan! They are ready to sweat drops of water and blood, and they are not aware of it. Oh why will you tire your selves in the heat, and wearie and tire your selves, when as you might sit down under such a pleasant shadow as the shadow of Jesus Christ is?

2. *Use.* Secondly, Let me speak a word to Poor Souls that are sensible of their bondage and misery by reason of sin, to such as cry out with *David* in *Psam* 38. 4. *for mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavie for me.* Oh you say, you have travailed in the wilderness, and have set many a weary step in a dry and barren wilderness where no water is, and never a tree for a shadow to shelter you; you dare sit down under the shadow of your own comforts and the creatures righteousness, you see there is no shelter but under the shadow of the Almighty. Well, let me tell you here's a tree of life that springs up in this your wilderness, that casts a shadow over your Souls, here

you

you may rest in a cool shadow, here will be a defence and a protection from the wrath of the Almighty. And let me say (for your incouragement) unto you,

First of all, That Christ is *willing* you should sit under his shadow, you have his own word for it, see what he speaks in *Math.* 11. 28. *Come to me all you that labour and are heavie laden, and I will give you rest*: Why do you stick so long in that condition, why do you say you are not laden enough? you know not whether your spirits be laden aright or no, or whether you be made sensible enough of sin, or whether you may be so bold, as to come to Christ, and sit under this his shadow.

Christ doth not offer himself upon any conditions, upon the condition of your weariness, It's not a conditional promise, but it's an absolute promise, it's a sweet incouraging promise, *come unto me you that are wearie*, says Christ, *and I will give you rest*. The Lord Jesus foresaw that they were most apt to be discouraged, poor labouring Souls, such as were prest with the guilt and burden of sin, and he knew that they were such as were fearful in coming in unto him, but says he, *come ye that are laden and wearie, and I will give you rest*, but then,

2. Secondly, Again, The Lord Jesus he is not only willing that you should sit under his shadow, but he will be a defence unto you under this shadow; you say you are hunted and pursued by Satan, you are hunted with wrath, Oh then that you would flee unto Christ, go now and sit under his shadow, there is no other shadow can defend you but this shadow of Christ. *Adam* you know he ran away from God when he was guiltie, he goes and runs his head into the bushes, but the Lord found him out; there

is no creature can be your defence. What says the *Psalmist, Psal.* 139. 7. *Thou hast beset me behind and before, &c. whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* there's no place of safetie but only in this shadow of Christ, and he is a sure defence; If it should rain Storms of fire and Brimstone, if once in Christ, this shadow will keep off all the heat of wrath, for he is a safe and sure defence. Nay let me say,

3. Thirdly, Further for your incouragement, The Lord Jesus he will not *deal Treacherously* with you when you turn in unto him: If you take under his shadow, he will not deal treacherously with you; when you flee from the pursuit of your enemy, he will *rescue, save and deliver*: The Lord Jesus he will not deal treacherously with those that come under his shadow, there is no drop of wrath shall fall from this tree to those that are under his shadow; the Lord Jesus he never made any prey upon Poor creatures that turn in to him for shadow and rest.

Ay but will he not betray me into the hands of others, of those that seek my soul to destroy it?

No certainly, Christ will not deal so with you, his honour is engaged to the contrary. You know what *Lot* said concerning those two strangers that came in to him, when they came to him for shadow, he would not deliver them, he would let go his life first, *Gen.* 19. 8. *for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.* When they came under his shadow for protection, *Lot* would not be so base as to betray them. He tells them he hath two Daughters that are undefiled, and he will rather deliver them into their hands than he will deliver those strangers, who took shelter under his roof: why, so says Christ, if wrath should demand you or justice should demand you, I will not let you go, he will rather say, let my Daughters go for it, my

body

body or Soul go for it, rather than they shall go my self shall go for it: thus Poor disconsolate Souls, you see Christ he will not betray you unto those who seek your Souls to destroy them. But

3. *Use.* Again, Thirdly, a word to those that have interest in Christ: Oh that you would make more use of this shadow of Jesus Christ: That Christians would sit more under Christs shadow, make use of it.

1. First of all, *Work* all your works under this shadow: Whatever you have to do for God, or for your Souls, or for eternity; whatsoever your hand finds to do, be sure you do it under this shadow: it's hard working in the open Sun in the heat of summer, it makes mens labours very uncomfortable. it adds to their toyl; but if they work under a shadow, it's a sweet refreshment to him, and it's a great ease to his work, he toiles and sweats less and with less pains: so Christians if you set your selves directly under Christ when ever you have any work to do for God, or concerning your souls, or when ever you have any burden that is too heavie, set your selves under Christ, through Christ you may do all things, and you may bear your burdens with a great deal of more ease and comfort; the Soul under Christ feels not the weight, nor burden which would sink another that is not under this shadow.

2. And then again, Secondly, as you should work all your works under this shadow, so be sure to *Walk* under this shadow: I say walk under this shadow in the whole course of your walking with God: Walk in the shadow, and it will be a great deal more comfortable unto you: Why, the Lord Jesus himself delights to walk with the Soul when it's under the shadow of this sun. God came and walked in the Garden, *Gen.* 3. in the *cool of the day*, God delights to walk

with the Soul when it's under the shadow of Christ, he delights there to manifest himself much to the Soul. Oh it's hot walking with God when the poor creature is not under the shadow of Christ; why, the presence of God, the very presence of God will be very hot and uncomfortable, if the Soul be not under the shadow of Christ: Ye can't see my face and live: then be sure you set your selves under the shadow of Christ in all your walkings with God: When you pray, pray under this shadow, set your selves under this shadow; and so when you hear, read, and meditate, in the whole course and way of your walking, be sure you set your selves under this shadow of Christ.

Quest. But you will say, what shadows of Christ should you sit under, walk under and work under?

Answ. 1. I Answer, First of all, look to the *Humane nature of Christ*, that is a sweet comfortable shadow through which you may see the face of God; I say the human Nature of Christ it's a shadow, a vail through which you may behold the face of God: God out of Christ is a great way off, and you cannot see the face of God he is so glorious, he is too glorious for your eye, you can't behold him: Ay but God in our nature, look upon God as he hath taken our nature up unto himself, and there you may see God nigh unto the poor creature; it's very comfortable to look up unto God through Christ, upon or through the shadow of the flesh of Christ.

2. Secondly, And then Secondly, make use of *the sufferings of Christ*: those are shadows that Christians should always walk under, and work under, and contemplate under; as I said before, they were terrible shadows to Christ, they were shadows of the night unto Christ: Ay but they are comfortable shadows; all that Christ suffered, and every passage of his sufferings, even

even the very shadow of Death that went over his head, it's a sweet and comfortable shadow unto his people that sit under him in it: Now poor souls sitting under these shadows there is a great deal to be seen, and the Soul by faith sits under these shadows: and under these shadows of the sufferings of Christ, Oh the glorious sight that it may have by faith; here it may see Justice and mercy meeting, and kiss each other, here it may see Justice reconciled and sin carried out and everlasting righteousness brought in: here it may see reconciliation purchased, and a way made for those that were afar off to come nigh unto God: here it may see deliverance from that wrath which is to come; it may see Death, Hell, sin and Satan and all trodden under foot; here it may see all grace, and all strength purchased by Christ; here it may see a door of grace, and a door of Life set open, and Oh what a glorious sight may the Soul see there!

3. Again, Thirdly, sit under the *Ordinances* of Christ, take heed you neglect not these shadows of Christ, and look at all the ordinances as shadows of Christ: this is the way to use ordinances aright: men and women never use ordinances aright untill such time as they look upon ordinances under this notion and consideration, as they are shadows of Christ, as they represent Christ and hold forth something of Christ. Take an Ordinance as it's out of Christ, and it's a shadow indeed, a meer shadow, a shadow of shadows; but take the shadow as it's in Christ, and then it's a glorious shadow, and holds forth abundance of sweetness and grace and comfort and refreshment; and then be sure you keep under Christ in the ordinance; when the Soul thus looks upon ordinances, as shadows of Christ, then ordinances are sweet and refreshing, and the Soul may see cause for ever to bless the Lord that he hath provided

shadows for poor Souls to sit under; that's a Third particular.

Again, Fourthly, you that have Interest in Christ know it's not enough to sit under his shadow, but delight your selves in sitting under his shadow: be like to the spouse in this; she sits and sits with *delight* under this shadow of Christ.

Quest. But you will say, what is it to sit under the shadow of Christ with *delight*? when may a Soul be said to sit under the shadow of Christ with delight, under the ordinances?

Answ. Delight, it's a complacency and rest which the soul takes of a suitable good: so that then the soul may be said to delight in Christ, or under the shadow of Christ, whenas it rests and takes up in Christ, as in the most suitable good; Oh what is so refreshing, and so suitable to a poor weary traveller as a comfortable refreshing shadow is to sit under? And Oh so, what so suitable to a poor weary soul as the comfortable shadow of Christ to sit under? When the soul doth thus apprehend this suitableness of Christ to it, Oh here's a suitable shadow, here's a great shadow, it's long and large, it's able to cover multitudes of transgressions; here's a might shadow, that can fence off abundance of wrath and displeasure. My sin hath reacht up to heaven, but here's a shadow that is higher than the Heavens; here's the shadow of the day, a refreshing shadow, and how suitable is that to a Poor soul, that hath sat long under the shadows of the night, the shadows of darkness, or the shadow of death? When the Soul doth thus look upon Christ as the most suitable good, and so to take up in him, then may the soul be said to sit down with delight under Christs shadow. But then again,

2. Secondly, What a man delights in, that he is continualy

continually *taken up withal*; his thoughts they run out much upon it: So the soul that delights in Christ, sits under Christs shadow with delight, it's much in the meditation of Christ, continually taken up with Christ. What says the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 1. *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night:* His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and how is that known? by his continual meditation of it: I know a gracious heart it may be weighed down by the prevalency of corruption, ay but it looks upon it as a burden, it crys out, Oh Lord how long shall my spirit cleave to the dust! or with *Paul* in *Rom.* 7. *Who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?* from this carnal heart, and this sensual frame of spirit? He is never well but when with Christ, he is then in his Element, Oh then how doth he rejoyce when he sees Christ lifted up and transfigured on the mount? Oh then it's good to be here always, let me never go down, but let me always live with God: here's a soul lifted up with delight in Christ.

3. Again, Thirdly, what the soul delights in, that it *desires*, and *desires more* of: a soul that delights in Christ, it desires more of Christ, more communion with Christ, more acquaintance with Christ, it's never satisfied: See what *David* says, *Psalm* 119. 174. *I have longed for thy salvation O Lord, and thy Law is my delight*: when the Law was his delight, he longed for the salvation of God; how did his soul long for God and after Christ? he expresses it in *Psalm* 42. 1. *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so doth my soul after thee O God:* as the hart panteth and breatheth after the water-brooks, so his soul *panted after God*, and when shall he get nigher God; *When shall I come and appear before thee?* The desires of the Soul prepare the soul for

delight, and stretch the soul wide for delight, when it shall enjoy that which it doth desire.

4. Again, Fourthly, delight in the soul doth beget strong desires in the soul, that it may enjoy more of God; and the soul that is thus carried out after Christ, desires to see him more, and to enjoy him more, desires to do all in Christ, to work under his shadow, and to delight under his shadow, to contemplate under his shadow, and walk under his shadow, then may the soul be said to delight in Christ.

Well then poor souls, what care should you take to sit under the shadow of Christ, to sit and to sit under his shadow with great delight: with the more delight you sit under the shadow of Christ, the more do you express the power of grace, and the power of Godliness; for certainly it's the excellency of a Christian, and the excellency of grace, that the soul can be taken up with delight in Christ: as it is with the sinfulness of sin, it's the height of wickedness and sin, when the sinner delights in sin, when he doth not only act in sin, but delight in sin, and in doing evil; even so when the Soul doth not think enough to do that which is good, but desires to do it with delight, and can delight in God and delight in Christ, and delight in grace and holiness, delight in doing for God, and delight in suffering for God, the more you delight in Christ, the more shall you express the power of grace.

5. But again, consider what cause you have to express your delight in Christ: remember what delight the Lord Jesus took in sitting under these shadows (which were most uncomfortable to him) for your sakes; *lo I come to do thy will, O my God*, in the 40. *Psalm* 8. *I delight to do thy will O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart.* It was hard work to Christ, and yet he delighted in it, because it was his fathers work, and because

cause your souls were concerned in it; it was the work of your redemption, and though it was a bitter cup, yet the Lord Jesus took delight in it: If Christ delighted in these uncomfortable shadows, in the shadow of Death for your sakes, Oh why should not you express the comfort and Joy of your hearts, in taking delight in being under his shadow? Again, Christ, he is the delight of God the Father: in *Isa.* 42. 1. It's the father that speaks of his son, he speaks of Christ, *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my soul delights*; he would have you not only behold him as a servant, but as his Elect in whom he delights: now if he be the delight of his father, what cause have you then to make him the delight of your Souls?

Nay further, It's the way to have all the desires of your hearts to be satisfied, to be filled; there's an express place for that, in *Psa.* 37. 4. *Delight thy self also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart*: He was speaking before that he should not fret because of the wicked, yea think that they have all that heart can wish, but you are mistaken, their desires are not satisfied, the more they drink, the more they thirst, they are not satisfied in the enjoyment of any creature comfort; but I will shew you the way of satisfaction, delight in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart; it's the way to more grace and more strength, it's the way to be more able to do for God, and more able to suffer for God, and abundance comes in, in this way in delighting in Christ; when the Lord hath brought the soul into this frame once, to take delight in Christ, under some shadows of Christ, Christ he is not far off from that Soul, but will satisfie and reveal himself to that Soul in a most glorious manner: see *Mal.* 3. 1. *Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly*

ly come to his temple, even the messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in; and he shall come suddenly, he is not far off; and this is an evidence of this his coming, that he stirs you up to seek him and to delight in himself, to sit under the shadow of Christ with delight. Oh then Christ he will come, and will come suddenly, and to manifest himself in a more glorious manner to that Soul that doth thus delight in him.

Well then, to conclude, I beseech you Brethren that you would look up to the Lord to have this frame of Spirit wrought in your hearts. Do not think it enough to have these shadows, but delight your souls under these shadows. Christ calls for a great deal of delight from you to himself: he is a most comfortable shadow, a most pleasant shadow, he is as the shadow of a tree, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary Land: and as he is of great benefit to you, so he calls for much delight from you; *Behold I bring you tidings of great joy*, says the Angel to the shepherds; where Christ is, there's tidings of great joy: and so when Christ draws nigh to your souls in his shadows, he expects there should be great joy and delight in him, that you should solace your selves under these shadow of Christ, sit down and meditate under these shadows: whilst you look under the Sufferings of Christ and ordinances of Christ, see what a glorious prospect the Lord hath set before your eyes, that you may take great delight: delight in every shadow of Christ, delight in his ordinances, set your selves under these shadows; It's said those that were sick and diseased, they laid them in the high way that the shadow of *Peter* might go over them; shall the shadow of *Peter* heal diseased bodies? why it's Christ under whose shadow who ever comes will heal diseased Souls, and he is greatly to be delighted in, he is a sweet refreshing shadow.

SER-

SERMON VI.

CANT. 2. 3.

I sat down under His Shadow with great delight, and His Fruit was sweet to my Taste.

I Shewed you what is this shadow of Christ, and what it is for a soul to sit under this shadow: I made Application the last day: But I shall proceed to the last clause of the verse, *and his fruit was swee to my taste.*

I have considered the shadow, now for the *tree* it self, *and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* Here is another benefit comes in by Christ! It's a mercie to sit under a shadow: a Poor weary man in a wilderness rejoyces that he finds the shadow of a fruitful tree to sit under, where he may not only sit and rest him, but sit and eat with delight, he'l account this a double mercie: and truly thus beneficial is Christ to his servants, he is willing they should sit under his shadow, and he is willing they should eat of his fruit, and it's the sweetest and the most delectable and delightful fruit that ever poor creature tasted: The taste is one of the external senses, the Object of it is meat and drink, here it's applyed to the inward man, to that taste the soul hath of Christ by faith, because the soul it doth taste

Christ,

Christ, and it doth taste the sweet fruit of Christ, and it finds pleasure in them, in feeding upon Christ: even as the palate doth find delight in savorie meats and delightful drinks: I shewed Christ yields both shadow and fruit: you see the mercies that Christ gives to his people, they are compleat mercies, for he is a compleat and a perfect saviour: he is not only a shadow, he is not only a defence unto them, he doth not only keep off evil, he doth not only keep off the scorching beams of the sun, he doth not only keep off the wrath and displeasure of the Father, but he is a pleasant shadow and yields pleasant fruit, under whom they may sit, and eat with delight and pleasure. So he is a perfect saviour: he is not only a privative but a positive Salvation; this is that which the Lord holds forth to *Abraham*, says he, *I am thy buckler, and thy exceeding great reward: I am thy buckler*, there's the shadow, and *I am thy exceeding great reward*, there's the fruit which the Lord gives him to feed upon. Christ doth not only deliver from wrath, but he brings in Life, glory and salvation, in *Dan.* 9. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy City, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins; and to make reconciliation for iniquitie, and to bring in everlasting righteousness*, &c. he shall carry out sin, and bring in righteousness; to take off sin that's not enough, but to brings in righteousness, an everlasting righteousness, far more glorious and excellent than the righteousness of men, or Angels; he shall deliver his people from the fear of death, this is a mercie: but that's not all, Christ, he brings in a glorious *hope*, hope of life, hope of glory; *who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope*, says the Apostle. He doth not think it enough to deliver his people from the Slavery of sin, but he translates them into

the

the freedom and liberty of the Sons of God, he delivers them from the power of sin, and he puts them under the power of grace, he brings them out of the Kingdom of darkness, and he brings them into the Kingdom of his own glorious light: it was not enough, to free them from wrath, to save them from hell, but he will put them into the possession of glory, and therefore he prayes his Father in *John* 17. that *he would let them be where he is:* he hath been a shadow to them, but that's not enough, they shall eat of his fruit, *let them be with me where I am that they may behold the glory thou hast given me*, which is and which was before the foundations of the world were laid. And

1. First, therefore brethren let your expectations and faith be according to the largeness of the heart of Christ, don't think it enough that you sit under his shadow, that the Lord Christ is one that can free you from wrath, don't think that enough; but look further to taste of his fruit, look up for those joyes and consolations of his Spirit, which he is willing to pour into your souls, as well as to free your souls from the apprehension of wrath; and so don't think it enough that you are delivered from the slavery and bondage of sin, that sin hath not dominion over you, don't think that enough, but look out further for the life of Christ to be revealed in you, to be manifested unto you, for life and righteousness to raign gloriously in your hearts, let your expectations be according to the largeness of the heart of Christ. And then

2. Secondly, you should deal with the Lord Christ as he deals with you. He did not think privative salvation enough; it was not enough to make a shadow for you, but he prepares fruit for you: and therefore don't think it enough that you have bare negative holiness, that what you do is not against Christ, but that

that you do what you do for Christ; for *he that is not with me* (says Christ) *is against me*. Don't think it enough, that you pass your time and spend your dayes, without being conscious of any wilful Sinning, but what you do from day to day, deal with Christ as he deals with you, that you may lift up his name, and honour him who will in due time honour and lift up you. That's the first particular. Again,

2. Secondly, Christ brings you first unto the shadow, and then he gives of his fruit to eat, and then he causes you to taste of his fruit. Because she was brought under his shadow, therefore she shall eat of his fruit: see how the Lord doth make one mercy to be the beginning of another mercie unto his people: it's Gods ordinary way of dealing with his Servants, because he hath shown them mercy, therefore he will shew them mercy, because he hath brought them under his shadow, he will have them to eat of his fruit. See *Gen.* 18. 17, 18. *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do*, says God, *seeing Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?* in his seed, in the Messiah that shall come out of his loins; yea and because I have given out this mercy, I won't hide what I will do: God makes one mercy to be the beginning of another. And so when he promised to bring his people unto the mountain in *Isa.* 56. 7. it was a mercy to be brought to the mountain of God, yea but God does not leave his people there, but that mercy shall be a step to many a mercy, which he intends to give out: when I have brought them thither, when I have got them thither, then *will I make them joyful in my house of prayer I will make a feast to them, a feast of fat things*; I'le chear, hearts their and accept of their sacrifices and services: and thus God makes one mercy, the beginning of another. And therefore Bre-

thren

Brethren do but see what a large testimony this gives unto the infinite goodness, and riches of free grace, which is in our God; well might the Apostle say, *God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us*, what riches of mercy is here? what fulness of grace and mercy in Christ is here? that he should make mercy the way to mercy, and mercy the beginning of mercy. Oh what fulness of grace and mercy is there in Christ? he is never well but when he is giving out: we see the glory, *the glory of the only begotten son of God, full of grace and truth*; there's a fulness indeed, all infinite fulness, and this fulness doth delight to empty it self and to communicate it self unto poor empty creatures; the riches of grace is mightily held forth in this. And then what encouragement is here to poor souls, that are conscious of their own unworthiness? They want such and such mercies, and such and such graces and strength, and I have received more mercy, than ever I can be thankful for, and how can I, or dare I be so bold with God; to ask more mercy than I am able to express thankfulness unto him for what I have received? Why, if thou hast no argument to plead with God, he will make this an Argument, because he hath done thee good already; this is not the manner of men, but it's the way of God: it's no argument with men; you shewed me such and such kindness, and therefore do me another such kindness; but the Lord he doth thus, he will make this an argument, his doing of thee good, from thence he will do thee good again. But then again,

3. Here is a third particular observable, First the shadow, and then the fruit. See how the Lord doth proceed gradually in a way of mercy in doing good to poor creatures; the longer they are with him, and the more they know him, the greater mercy he gives out: it's a greater mercy to eat of the fruit, than to sit under

under the shadow: well, after Christ hath caused thee to sit under his shadow, then he will give thee to eat of the fruit: the Lord deals with his servants as you deal with your servants; it may be you are not so friendly to them at first when they come to be apprentices, but afterward when they have served you long, and you have learnt them more of the mystery of their trade, you will use them more friendly and communicate yet more of the mystery of your trade, and secrets, and the like: and so the Lord deals with his servants, though he may hide his face for a time, yet at last he will shine graciously upon them, he will deal friendly with them, he will use them as friends and not as Servants, he will communicate of his secrets to them; I *call you not Servants, but I call you friends*, as Christ did to his disciples at last, for he reveals the whole will of his father unto them; and therefore what encouragement is here to all you who are Christs? although it may be for the present, you have not such comings in from Christ, you may say, blessed be God, I sit under the shadow, and the Lord Christ is a safety to me: but you have not found of that sweetness which is spoken of him; yet let me tell you, you shall eat of his dainties, the longer you are his servants the more gently will he deal with you, and learn you, and shew you great things; the Lord Christ will shew greater and greater things to his people, the longer they are in his house, the longer they serve him, the more they shall know of his Fathers mind and will, and the more friendly will he deal with them; and therefore don't fear things to come, or conditions to come, and don't think that things to come may separate from his love, for certainly the longer you are with him, the better he'l use you; and as it may be said of wicked men, the worst is still to come, so of the righteous man, the best is still to come, the best

best is still behind; so long as they are on this side the grave, on this side of Heaven, the best is still behind, for Christ reserves better and better for his people: These are the particular observations that do offer themselves, I shall make entrance into the main general proposition or observation which the words hold forth, and that is this.

Obser. *That the fruit that grows upon Christ is exceeding pleasant to the believing Soul*: the fruit that grows upon Christ is exceeding pleasant and sweet; he is a generous Vine of Gods own planting, the choicest tree that ever the hand of God planted, and therefore the best fruit; the sweetest fruit that ever grew upon tree, it grows upon Christ: It was fruit that the great King of Heaven intended for his own spending: it must needs be sweet fruit, excellent fruit; God intended that all the fruit that he would feast his servants and his friends and children with, should grow upon this tree; and therefore it must needs be pleasant fruit, he intends to make a feast unto his people, a feast of fat things, as is promised in *Isa*: 25. 6. *and in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined:* now all the fat things that are at the feast with which God doth refresh the souls of his people upon this mountain, grow upon this tree, all the fatness I say it comes from this Olive-tree, and all those cups of sweet consolations which the Lord doth stay poor fainting and bleeding Souls with, it's the fruit of this tree; nay the great feast that God shall make in Heaven, at the great supper of the Lamb, with which God shall feast all his people for ever and ever, and sit and rise no more, and all the dainties that shall be at the supper of the Lamb, it shall be the

fruit of this tree, they shall ever feed upon Christ, and for ever feed upon that fruit which grew upon Christ, they shall feed for ever upon this one dish, and shall never be weary of this fruit; and therefore certainly the fruit that grows upon Christ, it must needs be exceeding sweet and delightful fruit.

Quest. But you will say, what is the fruit that grow upon this tree? What is this fruit that is so sweet and delightful?

Answ. Why, there are innumerable kinds, more than can be reckoned. I shall give you a taste of some.

1. First of all, there's the fruit of *Christs heart*, the fruit that grows upon Christs heart. Oh! the abundance of precious fruit; all those gracious thoughts which are in the heart of Christ to his people, are one kind of precious fruit that grows upon this tree: in *Isa.*10. 12. *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria*: God speaks of the fruit of the stout heart of the King of *Assyria*, but the fruit that grows upon the heart of Christ it's other kind of fruit: it's not the fruit of a stout heart, but it's the fruit of a gracious heart: *many are thy wonderful works, O Lord*, says the *Psalmist*, *Psal.*40. 5. *and thy thoughts which are to us ward*; the gracious thoughts of the heart of Christ towards his people, they are many, they are more than can be numbred. But more particularly, to consider the fruit that grows upon the heart of Christ.

1. First of all, there's abundance of meekness and lowliness of mind, and tenderness towards poor creatures which grows upon the heart of Christ; in *Mat.* 11. when he calls poor creatures to him, *v.* 28, 29, *I am meek and lowly in heart*; it's an argument by which Christ doth invite poor heavie laden sinners

ners to come to him: why, but they may be discouraged from coming, by looking upon Christ as full of wrath, anger and implacable, saying, Christ will not be reconciled: you are mistaken of me, says Christ, there is no such sowr fruit grows upon my heart, though this be your disposition, yet it's not mine, *I am meek*. But I am a poor worm, saith the soul, and will the Lord ever look down on such a poor worm? he is ascended and sits in glory, and will he look upon a poor worm? *I am meek and lowly*, says Christ, though I be never so high, I can look upon poor creatures, I am meek and lowly in heart.

2. Secondly, there are in Christs heart *very earnest desires of reconciliation with poor creatures*, this is another gracious fruit that grows upon Christs heart: I say vast desires and large desires, if poor creatures will come in and accept of those tenders of grace and salvation which he is pleased to make in his Gospel, let them come, says he, let them come, *he that is a thirst let him come, and whosoever will let them come, and let them drink of the water of life freely*; I desire you should come, says Christ, let no man hinder, let him not lay blocks in his own way, I am willing he should come: and thus doth Christ hold forth his golden Scepter, as *Ahashuerus* did his golden scepter to *Hester*, come in *Hester*, says he; so says Christ, Poor Soul, come, let him come, come in and drink of the water of life freely. And so, *as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, that you would be reconciled unto him.* That's a second fruit that grows on Christs heart. Again,

3. Thirdly, there are *affections*, that grow upon Christs heart, *sympathizing affections*: Oh! how tender is he of his people, he suffers when they suffer, he bears the heaviest end of the burden; *in all*

[t]*heir afflictions he was afflicted*: and therefore he [is] called a merciful High Priest, and he is one that knows[s] how to have compassion, and how to be tender, see *Heb.* 5. 1, 2. *for every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin, who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.* He can have compassion, he is able to have compassion, he hath a compassionate disposition within him, he knows how to pity them when ignorant, and when they are out of the way, he knows how to portion out grace to every of his peoples conditions, he knows how to sympathize with them in their burdens, for he was compassed about with our Infirmities, he knows well what afflictions are, and what temptations to sin are, and he best knows how to compassionate his people; these compassions are a gracious fruit growing in Christs heart.

4. Fourthly, But then again, there are *thoughts of delight* in Christs heart. Oh how doth he rejoyce over his people with joy, with great joy! He doth solace himself in their communion: *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys, as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters*; she is unto him as the lily among thorns, *let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely*: the expressions of the great delight, that Christ takes in his people, this is the fruit of Christs heart.

2. Secondly, There is the fruit of *his lips*; not onely the fruit of his heart is exceeding delightful, but the fruit of his lips is exceeding sweet: see *Isa.* 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips Peace, peace to him that is afar off and to him that is nigh,* saith

saith the Lord, *and I will heal him*: peace it's a fruit of Christs lips; as there are thoughts of peace in his heart, so there are words of peace in his mouth, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak; therefore it's said, that the tongue of the learned is given to him, *the Lord hath given to him the tongue of the learned, and he knows how to speak a word in season*; there is none in all the world can speak a word in season to the wounded Soul but Christ, his lips are like unto the lilies dropping sweet-smeling myrrhe: every promise in the Gospel is a fruit of the lips of Christ, and Oh! how sweet and refreshing is this fruit, how delightful is the least promise of Christ! if he be pleased to bring it home to the soul, it stays it as with flaggons of wine, when Christ shall bring home a promise to the Soul; else a promise will do us no good, will be of no use to us, *for all the promises of God, they are in him yea, and in him Amen*; all the promises they grow upon this tree, and it's most precious fruit: if you will take *Davids* commendation of it, he eat and commended it, *Psal.* 19. 10. *more to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold:* he speaks of the word of the Lord, the promises of the Lord, they are sweeter than the honey; nay take it when it is at the sweetest, when it is in the Comb, the word of the Lord goes beyond it, *Sweeter than the Honey, and the honey Comb:* Oh! how gracious and acceptable is the least word that drops from Christs Mouth, out of Christs lips to the poor wounded bleeding Soul? *A word in season*, says *Solomon*, *is like Apples of gold in Pictures of Silver*; pleasant and exceeding acceptable fruit unto a poor soul. Again,

3. Thirdly, There's not only the fruit of Christs lips, but the fruit of Christs *loins*. Oh the frui

of his womb! he hath a seed which he brings forth unto God, which are pleasant and much be to delighted in; all that are brought in to God by the preaching of the Gospel, they are called the fruit of Christ, they are his seed, *he shall see the travail of his Soul and be satisfied*; this fruit is mighty delightful to Christ, and therefore should be delightful and is delightful to the Saints. Christ had a mighty delight in children, he cared not what he suffered, what pains, what travails; let the travail of the Soul be never so great, so he might bring forth children he cared not, nay though he knew he should die in travail, yet he cared not, and though he knew he should die of it, and also live again and rise again, he asks no other reward but only that he might have children, and it was the great promise in *Isaiah* 53. 10, 11. *He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the good pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the travail of his Soul and shall be satisfied:* he shall have a multitudinous offspring, because he was such a lover of children. And therefore when the promise was made to *Abraham*, *I'le bless thee, and thy seed shall be as the Stars of heaven that could not be numbred:* and therefore you read in the *Revelations* of a *great number which no man can number*, and he brought them all unto the Father and presented them, *Here am I and the Children thou hast given me.* They are exceeding delightful to him; and as Christ takes delight in them, so

The saints can't but take delight when they see souls brought in to God and brought forth for heaven, they cannot but rejoyce in it, and take great delight in this fruit of Christ: To name no more,

4. A fourth sort of fruit, and that's the fruit of *Christs life*. Take him as he was here upon earth in the dayes of his flesh, when he was planted in the Orchard of the world, he brought forth exceeding much fruit unto God, he

he was the most fruitful tree that ever the Father planted, he brought forth a world of precious desirable fruit; there was never any part of Christs life that was not fruitful, *he went up and down doing good.* He sought all opportunities to do good: *I must work the works of him that sent me while the day lasts, for the night cometh when I shall not work*; he took all opportunities for the doing good to the souls of men, and the bodies of men, and glad was he that he had an opportunitie. There is never a part of Christs life, if you look into the history of it, as it lies before us by the Evangelists, but was altogether fruitful, and all that fruit was exceeding pleasant and desirable, and affords an abundance of matter of refreshment; there is matter of much contemplation when you look into the life of Christ. And these are some of the kinds of fruit which grow upon this Apple-tree, upon Christ the tree of life; they are the fruit of his heart, the fruit of his lips, the fruit of his womb, the fruit of his loins, the fruit of his life. There are divers other kinds of fruit, but I shall speak no more at this time, the Lord help you to feed upon this fruit,

SERMON VII.

CANT. 2. 3.

——— *And his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

AFter many particular observations, we came the last day to the main general proposition that these words hold forth, viz. *The fruit that grows upon Christ the tree of life is sweet to the believing soul:* it must needs be so, for it's the fruit that God doth feast his friends withal; the feasts that he makes to his servants upon his holy Mountain they are nothing else but the fruit that grows upon this tree: Nay in the great supper of the Lamb, that everlasting feast that God shall make in heaven, wherein his people shall sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of God, and shall rise no more, they shall have no other dainties but the fruit that grows upon this tree. But what's the fruit that grows upon Christ, that is so pleasant and sweet? I told you of the fruit of his heart, the fruit of his lips, the fruit of his loins, the fruit of his life: and I came in the last place to speak of the fruit of his Death, and this is a precious bough full

of

of fruit. Well, what is the fruit that grows upon Christs Death?

First of all, *Satisfaction of his Fathers Justice:* That satisfaction which is given to Justice is a fruit of Christs death; He hath paid the debt, he hath cancelled the bond, he hath given to Justice what Justice could demand, he hath satisfied it to the utmost farthing, so that now Justice and mercy are met together, they now do embrace and kiss each other; Justice is satisfied and mercy is satisfied; Justice is glorified and mercy is glorified: the believing soul may look Justice in the face as well as mercy in the face, because Justice hath fully as much from Christ, as it can demand; now this satisfaction which is given to Justice it's a fruit of Christs death; But again,

2. Secondly, By the death of Christ, *Christ is made a fit Object for poor sinners to pitch upon*; He is an Object for the guilty sinner that durst not look Christ in the face, he is a suitable object to a poor bleeding sinner; there's abundance of precious fruit that grows upon Christ the tree of life, but this tree it was too high for a poor wretch, and could not have been enjoyed if Christ had not been willing to have his fruit cut down, he was cut down to the earth, laid upon the earth, humbled to the death of the cross; so that now the poor guilty sinner that is humbled through the sense of his sin, may look upon Christ in and through his death, and is become a suitable object for the poor soul to pitch upon: what more suitable to a wounded bleeding conscience than a wounded bleeding dying saviour? Now that Christ is so suitable an Object for a poor guilty sinner to pitch upon, this is a fruit of Christs death.

3. Again, Thirdly, Christ by his death hath *carried out sin, and brought in righteousness*; this is another fruit that

that grows upon the death of Christ, the volume of sin in respect of the guilt, in respect of the condemning power of it, he hath carried out, and made an end of it, in *Dan.* 9. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecie, and to anoint the most holy.* Sin, like a monster, seised upon it, suckt the very heart blood of Christ; well, the Lord Jesus he will be avenged of him, and therefore his blood, it was the bane of sin. I remember *Pliny* in his natural History, reports of the enmitie that is betwixt the Dragon and Elephant, the Dragon gets under the Elephant, and sucks his blood, and by his fall oft-times is the death of the Dragon; and this may be fitly compared to Christ, sin is the Dragon that seized upon Christ; and the Lord Jesus by his death fell upon sin, he hath crusht it all to pieces, he hath taken away the killing power of sin, so that sin, by this deed, he hath carried it out, as an abominable thing, and in the room of it he hath brought in a glorious righteousness, a perfect righteousness, and put it upon his people, a far more glorious righteousness than the righteousness of the Angels; so that the believing Soul may stand in the presence of God, with much more boldness than formerly. This is a third fruit that is brought in by the death of Christ.

4. Again, Fourthly, *Reconciliation* is brought in as another fruit by the death of Christ: perfect reconciliation, and sweet communion and fellowship with God, all this is the fruit of Christs death; he by his death hath taken in the wall of partitions, and by his death hath made those that were enemies friends; those that were a far off, nigh unto him; so that the heart of God

is

is now nigh unto a believing Soul, and the believing soul may say now, with the Apostle, *truly our fellowship is with the father, and with his son Jesus Christ.* Before, it might be said of every man in the world, his fellowship was with sin, with hell, and the devil, and enemies to God; but now by the death of Jesus Christ peace is made, and reconciliation is made, and believing souls may say truly, *our fellowship is with the father and with the son Jesus Christ:* that's a fourth fruit that grows upon the death of Christ.

5. Fifthly, The death of Christ, *it hath crusht the head of the old serpent*, he hath bound the strong man and cast him out, and delivered poor captive souls out of the mouth and paw of the Lyon; it was promised long before Christ came, thousands of years, that *the seed of the woman should break the serpents head:* and Christ by his death made good that promise, he did crush the serpents head: by death he overcame him that had the power of death. But then,

6. Sixthly, Here is another fruit of Christs death, and that is by *subduing the power of sin and corruption in the hearts of Gods people.* This is a very sweet and desirable fruit that grows upon this bough, the death of Christ; I say the subduing and conquering of the power of sin in the heart: see what the Apostle says of it in *Rom.* 6. 11. *Likewise, ye also reckon your selves dead unto sin, but alive unto God*: he said before in v. 10. *In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth he liveth unto God, so likewise reckon ye your selves dead unto sin*; that is, in that he died he died to sin to the crucifying of sin, to the violating and mortifying of the power and strength of sin; and therefore brethren, account and reckon your selves dead unto sin: fetch arguments from the death of Christ to kill sin; and truly brethren there are no such power-

Powerful arguments in the world to the subduing of the Power of sin, as those which are to be fetcht from the Power of the death of Christ. Oh, says the believing soul, shall that be sweet to me which was so bitter to Christ? shall I look upon that as a friend, which was an enemie to Christ? Shall I love that which was a nail and a spear to pierce Christ? Shall I take delight in that cup, to drink of that cup which was such poyson to Christ? No, God forbid, says the believing soul, did not I die with Christ? did not he stand as a common person, and therefore ought not I to have reckoned my self dead, dead unto sin, even as Christ died for sin? And how then shall we that are dead unto sin, live any longer unto it? This is another fruit that grows upon the death of Christ.

7. Seventhly, *there is a holy and sanctified use that believers have of all ordinances and of all creatures*; and this comes in as another fruit of the death of Christ; to unbelievers (says the Apostle) *all is defiled*, and all is polluted; his conscience is defiled, he defiles the best things, and the holiest ordinances, he hath no sanctified use of creature comforts: but by the death of Christ all ordinances are sanctified and blessed, and all creatures are blessed and sanctified to such as have faith in Christ; the blood of Christ sprinkled upon a man hath a smell exceeding sweet, and makes the soul to be thankful for every crum; Oh, this morsel is sanctified through Christs blood; and thus every mercy being sanctified is sweetned by the death of Christ: and that is most comfortable.

8. Eighthly, Christ hath *changed temporal death, and taken away the evil of it for his people*; this is a most sweet and desirable fruit of the death of Christ; that temporal death is changed, sweetned, sanctified, that the sting of death is taken out for all his people:

Christ

Christ hath sent a challenge to death, Oh death, *I will be thy death*, long before he came into the world, and he made good his word when he came, he fought a duel and overcame death, as in 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O Death where is thy Sting? O grave where is thy victorie?* this is a most precious fruit. Nay *death* that was a curse, is *turned into a blessing*; and this makes it a greater mercy, death that was a curse and the worst of curses is turned into a blessing to the believer, it doth them a very good turn, it's the fathers Servant, and it helps to bring them home, and although it be terrible to look upon its hard vizage, yet still he doth a good office for all that are in Christ, he helps to carry them home unto their fathers house, and this is another fruit of Christs death.

9. Again, Ninthly, Christ *hath swallowed up eternal death*, he hath vanquished hell, by letting forth the stream of his blood, so that that now there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, there's no hell, there's no wrath, no displeasure in the Almighty: he hath opened a door wide to life, grace, and salvation; and this is another fruit of Christs death.

10. Again, in the Tenth place, Another fruit of Christs death is this, *The confirmation and ratification of all the promises of the whole Covenant that he hath made with his people*: and this is a most precious and desirable fruit; I say by the Death of Christ all the promises are confirmed and ratified: he hath confirmed his testament, his last will and testament, with all the Legacies that Christ gave to his people, he bequeathed grace, life and salvation, and all these were ratified, when Christ died. When a man dies, his will is sure, then there's no man can alter the will of him that is dead, for by death the will is ratified: As the Covenant is unalterable being ratified by the death of Christ, so every promise

promise is ratified by the death of Christ: it's as sure that heaven and earth shall pass, but not one jot or tittle of the word shall fall to the ground, they shall as certainly be fulfilled as God is in heaven; now that the promises are so sure, this establishment and confirmation it's a blessed fruit of the Death of Christ. So much for the fruit of Christs death.

6. Sixthly, Again in the sixth place, let us consider *the fruit of Christs resurrection*; and that hath a great deal of fruit; the resurrection of Christ, what fruit grows upon this bough! Three sorts of fruit grow upon this bough. But briefly of these.

1. First of all, the believing soul is *fully and compleatly justified*: The full and compleat justfying of the Soul depends upon the Resurrection of Christ: for when Christ arose from the dead, he is said to be *justified of the Spirit*: That is, he was fully acquitted, he was fully absolved; God the father declared to all the world that he was satisfied, the debt was paid, he was fully satisfied: I say, it was declared to men and Angels at that time when Christ did arise, the judge himself acquitted him, he did not break prison, but the father himself justified him; and it's said, the Angel came and rolled away the stone, which makes it evident to all the world that he was justified; and so he being justified, all his people are justified virtually in him, so that he left all his chains behind him: He did not come forth, when he came forth, bound hand and foot, as *Lazarus* did, but the Napkins and all bonds were left behind; so that the compleat justification of a Sinner comes in by virtue of Christs compleat Resurrection. The Apostle speaks of the *Answer of a good conscience by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*. A good conscience may now answer, if justice come to demand any thing, the good conscience it may answer and say, Lord didst

not

thou acquit thy son by his Resurrection? didst not thou roll away the stone, or cause the Angel to do it? and why dost thou come to me? That's a sweet fruit that grows upon the Resurrection of Christ.

2. Secondly, the *Quickening of the new man, and the raising of a dead heart to life*, is another fruit that grows upon the resurrection of Christ; now Christ is he that quickens whom he will: by the mighty power of his resurrection is a poor soul raised up to live unto God; I say all the life and strength of grace comes from the resurrection of Christ; see what the Apostle says in *Rom.* 6. 4. mark, *that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father*, that is, by the glorious power of the father, by that almighty power in which he was so glorious, I say Christ was raised from the dead, *even so*, saith he, *we should walk in newness of life*; it's a mighty argument unto a gracious heart to walk with God, and to live unto God, and to walk in the newness of the Spirit; why, Christ he is risen, he is risen from the dead, and therefore when this word comes to the soul that is grovelling here below, and seeks Christ in dead works and duties, he is not there, he sees not the death nor the resurrection of Christ, but the power of Christ doth raise souls to live unto this newness of life, and that is the fruit of the resurrection of Christ. But,

3. Again, Thirdly, there is another fruit of the resurrection of Christ, and that is *the Resurrection of the body at the last day*, this is a most sweet fruit that grows upon Christ, the resurrection of the bodies of all his Saints at the last day: he is said to be the *first-fruits of them that slept*, in 1 *Cor.* 15. 20. He is become the first-fruits of them that slept; the first-fruits sanctifie the whole crop, they were to bring the first-fruits, the first-fruits they were brought forth, the first-fruits

sanctifie

sanctifie the crop, that as they should reap that for the glory of God, so their whole harvest: now Christ he is the first-fruits of them that slept, his resurrection it gives assurance unto the saints that as he is risen from the dead, so the Lord he shall also raise them up, he shall raise them up by the mighty power of his resurrection: see there in the Gospel by Matthew 27: 52. *And many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many*; a pledge given of our resurrection, that all the saints shall be raised at the last, many of the Saints that slept in the dust they arose, and were seen of many in *Jersalem*, there were witnesses of it; this is a pledge I say that the bodies of all the Saints shall be raised up at the last day; and these are the fruits that grow upon Christs Resurrection.

7. Seventhly, There are also many fruits that grow upon Christs *Ascension, his Ascension* unto Heaven; to tell you what fruits are there.

1. First of all, this is the fruit of Christs Ascension, viz. *The glorious triumph over all enemies, and powers of darkness*, both in his own person, and in his people, I say a glorious triumph over all enemies, for the day of Christs Ascension was the day of his triumph; it's said in *Ephes.*4. 8. *when he ascended on high he led captivity captive*; alluding to a great conquest that when they have taken captives they will have a day of triumph to shew them openly: and so Jesus Christ he led captivity captive, Sin and Satan and all the powers of darkness that had led poor souls captive, even them hath he led captive, and looks upon all these as bound by Christ, and they shall do no great harm: that's the first fruit of Christs ascension.

2. Secondly, the *donation of the spirit, and all the gifts*

gifts of the Spirit, is another fruit of Christs Ascension; it's said before in that place of the *Ephesians*, That when he ascended on high, he led Captivity Captive, and *he gave gifts to men*: all the gifts that are given to Churches, to men for the use of the Churches, they are the fruit of Christs Ascension: Nay, all the gifts and graces that are given to any particular Soul, they are fruits of Christs Ascension; he gave gifts to men, yea, to the *Rebellious*: yea, *The Spirit of grace and consolation* is given to the Saints to comfort them, and to lead them into truth. See what Christ hath promised in *John* 16. 7. *Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you*: see how the sending of the Spirit did depend upon Christs going. If I do not ascend, the Spirit will not come; but if I go, I will send him.

3. But again Thirdly, There is another fruit of Christs Ascension, and that is, *The carrying up of the hearts of his people into Heaven*: the holy conversation, and those heavenly affections and dispositions, which are (or should be) in all the Saints, they are the fruits of Christs Ascension, for he ascended for this very end that he might lift up their hearts: *If I be lifted up, I will draw all men after me*: he was lifted up into heaven, that he might draw eyes and souls after him: and therefore it's observable how Christ ascended, he ascended openly, he ascended in the view of all that were present: he ascended whileſt he was in the midst of his Disciples, talking of things concerning the Churches, he presently ascended; this was one end why Christ would not ascend in secret, but openly, that they may know he is in Heaven, and that by the sight of his Ascension he might draw them after him in

Spirit, though they could not follow him in body for the present: as the Eagle, when she teaches her young ones, she goes before and flyeth aloft, that they may follow after her; and thus doth the Lord Jesus, he soars aloft, that he might make his Saints to give holy attempts, at least in their Spirits, whilst their bodies are here on earth; Oh, he can't endure that they should be creeping here below; a low spirit and a low conversation is not fit for Saints: he would not have his people to have rooting in the earth, he would have his people be like *Aaron's* Rod: *Aaron's* Rod it was not like other Trees, it had no rooting in the earth, and yet it blossomed; such would the Lord have his people to be, he can't away that they should have low conversations, that their affections should be creeping here upon the earth and not soaring aloft, and living in heaven where he is. Under the Levitical Law, the things that did creep upon the earth, they were abominable, and they were unclean; God gave a Commandment in *Levit.* 11.41. *And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination, it shall not be eaten*; it doth typifie what the Lord would have his people to be, he would not have his people to live below on the earth: the earth is but duft, and that's Serpents meat; the Lord would have them to live above as Christ did, that his Ascension might be a means to draw their hearts above, that their affections, meditations and desires, and whole conversation might be in heaven: as for us, saies the Apostle, *Our Conversation is in heaven*; now when this conversation is given out to any of the Saints, let them be thankful to Christ for it, it's not in themselves, it's the fruit of this bough that proceeds from Christ the Tree of Life. But then

4. Fourthly,

4. Fourthly, Again, all those boughs and branches that are above, they with all the *Mansions* are the fruit of Christs Ascension, in *John* 14. 2. *In my Fathers house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you*; this is one end of Christs going to heaven that he might prepare a place for all his people, that he might furnish a Table with great glory, that he might prepare a great supper against their coming, that he might bespeak a great welcom for them against they come there; I say there are glorious preparations that Christ is making to entertain his people with, when they are come into heaven, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, nor the heart of man can't conceive: all these are fruits of Christ's Ascension. Besides, their Ascension in body and soul at the last day, is a fruit or consequent of Christ's Ascension, he ascended that they might ascend after him, *Father I will that they which thou hast given me, may be with me, that they which thou hast given me, may come and behold my glory:* The Lord Jesus he hath set the doors wide open to his people, having unlocked them, and taken the Keys; he hath not only the Keys of heaven, but of hell; and the Lord he hath set a flaming Sword by the way of Paradise, that after *Adam* had sinned he should not come there: but Christ by his Ascension, he hath taken away that Sword and opened the door, and set forth that glory, that they shall all be put into the possession of that glory which he hath prepared for them; and this Ascension which they shall partake of at the last day, is a blessed consequent of Christs Ascension into heaven. I thought to have spoken of the fruit of Christ's Mediation or Intercession, and so have come to the Use, but I shall reserve it for another time.

SERMON VIII.

CANT. 2. 3.

——*And his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

I Shewed you what this fruit is, that is sweet: there are several kinds of fruit that grow upon Christ: you have heard of the fruit of his heart, the fruit of his lips, the fruit of his loins, the fruit of his life: I speak the last day of the fruit of his death: and I shewed you ten several fruits that grow upon this bough: I speak also of the fruit of his Resurrection, and the fruit of his Ascension; I shall repeat nothing, because I must be short. Here's but one bough more, and that is his *Intercession*, or his *sitting at the right hand of his Father*. Now, what's the fruit that grows upon this bough, the fruit of Christs Intercession?

1. First of all, *The actual Application of all that he hath purchased unto his people*; this is the fruit of Christ's Intercession, he hath purchased by his death, and applies by his Intercession: the Lord Jesus he intercedes for them in particular, he hath all their names in particular upon his breast, and he doth not only intercede

tercede for them in the lump, but for every particular soul that his Father hath given him: so he tells *Simon Peter, I have prayed for thee Simon, that thy faith fail not*; Christ hath purchased pardon of sin by his blood, but the Application of pardon to this and that soul, it's the fruit of Christs. Intercession; and so he hath purchased grace, and he hath purchased glory by his blood; but the giving out of grace, and putting the soul into actual possession of glory, this is a fruit of Christ's Intercession.

2. Again Secondly, There is another precious fruit grows upon this bough, and that is, *The large way, or door that is made and set open for poor sinners to come to God the Father by.* There is a large door for poor sinners to come to God by, and that this door is open, and held open, we are beholden to Christs Intercession; in *Heb.* 7. 25. *He lives for ever to make Intercession for all that come to God by him,* and therefore, saies the Text, *He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him:* so that now the poor sinner that durst not come to God, that stood afar off trembling, that look'd up like the poor Prodigal, and said, *Father I have sinned before thee in thy sight, and am not worthy to come under thy roof:* even for such poor souls hath Christ set open a door by his Intercession to come to God.

Will ever Christ plead for such a one as I am? Yes, saies the Text, *He lives to do it*; he lives for ever for that end, to make Intercession for them that come to God by him.

But is it possible that ever Christ should prevail for such a one? though Christ be willing to intercede, is it possible that he should prevail for such a sinner?

Yea, it's possible with Christ, for *He is able to save to the uttermost*; if he could not prevail, he were not

able to save to the uttermost, but, saies the Text, *He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him.*

3. Again, Thirdly, There is another precious fruit that grows upon the Intercession, and that is, *The presentation of the persons, and of the Sacrifices of all his people in his own name and righteousness unto God his Father*; this is the fruit of Christ's Intercession: He takes all his Children by the hand and leads them to his Father, *Lo*, saies he, *here am I, and the Children thou hast given me.* Father, these are my friends, these are my beloveds, let them find welcom in heaven for my sake; he presents also their sacrifices, all their services, their prayers, their praises, and their works, and washes them in his blood; it is said in the *Revelation*, there was an Angel stood by the Altar with a Censer in his hand, and he offered much sweet Incense, which he mixed with the prayers of the Saints: the Lord Jesus is that Angel, he mixes all their sacrifices with his Incense, that their prayers and praises may ascend before the Lord as Incense, that all their liftings up of hands and hearts may be acceptable.

4. Again, Fourthly, There's another fruit upon the bough of Christ's Intercession, and that is, *The casting out of all those Indictments which are brought into the Court by malicious Adversaries against any of his people:* the Lord Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father to cast them out; the Devil brings many a black bill of Indictment, but the Lord Jesus sits there to rebuke him; in *Zach.* 3. 2. *The Lord rebuke thee Satan*, saies the Angel, *the Lord rebuke thee:* he pleads for them, he is their Advocate, he lets his Father know that all the accusations that Satan brings in are out of malice and envy: he is a malicious wrathful wretch, a Murderer from the beginning, he hath alwaies

alwaies sought the destruction of my servants, and therefore Father hear him not, saies he, for he accuses out of malice, he hath alwaies been a false accuser, he was cast out of heaven for a common Barreter, and therefore Lord let him not plead at thy Bar; there are many Bills brought in, but the Lord Jesus he shews the Cross that is made over them, they are all croft with the cross of his own blood, all is discharged, all is paid; that Christ by his blood makes a mighty noise in heaven: sin cries loud many times, but the blood of Christ cries louder, it fills all the Throne with outcries, and it will be heard, it will be heard when it speaks for poor sinners: this is a precious fruit of Christ's Intercession.

5. Fifthly, *The preservation of the Saints in a state of grace*, is a fruit of Christ's Intercession, they can't fall, it's not possible they should be pluck'd out of his hand, for he holds them sure, he is continually Interceding for them, it's not possible they should be forgotten in heaven, for he alwaies bears their names, and presents them unto his Father; he Intercedes continually for more grace, for new grace and for new strength, and new supplies to be given out every moment for his people, and therefore it's not possible their faith should fail: *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*; it's not possible that their faith should fail; and this is a fruit of Christ's Intercession. Christ intercedes for his people, and therefore they are kept, and shall be kept by his mighty power through faith to salvation. I might add, *The protection of Churches, and the destruction of enemies*, as a fruit of Christ's Intercession; he sits to protect his people, and he sits there to destroy his enemies: *Sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy foot-stool*; *the Lord in that day shall*

make Kings submit unto him; He shall strike through Kings in the day of his power: Intimating that the subjection of all enemies is a fruit of Christ's Intercession. These are the fruits that grow upon this bough. Now you have in part seen what fruit this Tree bears, let us make Application.

Use. First of all, If the fruit that grows upon Christ be so sweet to a believing soul, Then,

1. Use of Conviction, First, This may serve for Conviction unto such as taste no sweetness in Christ's fruit, that have no longings, no desires to eat of the fruit of this Tree; why certainly it's an evidence against such, they never were yet espoused to Christ. It's said of young women in their breeding condition, their desires are after fruit, rather to feed on fruit than other meat: I am sure it is so with such as are the Spouses of Christ, their desires are alwaies after fruit, they would by their good will eat nothing else, their souls are alwaies longing after it, they can't make a good meal, though they have never so much of creature comforts, if they have not a dish of this fruit, of this fruit that grows upon this Tree of Life: Oh poor creatures (they know not, such as find no sweetness) surely they know not what this fruit is, *If thou knewest the gift of God*, saies Christ to the woman of *Samaria* in *John* 4. 10. *and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water*; poor soul, thou knowest not what this Tree of Life is: Oh my friends, if you knew this Tree, the sweetness of it, you would say, Lord give us ever to eat of the fruit of this Tree; what pity is it that such fruit should be lost, because poor souls know not the goodness and sweetness of it! It's very strange that poor sinners should take so much delight in the world, so much

delight

delight in the fruit that grows upon their own stock, so much pleasure in the fruit of iniquity, and should find no sweetness, nor savour in the fruit that grows upon Christ: I say there is no fruit so sweet as this, yea there is nothing sweet but what grows upon this Tree, no mercy sweet if it grows not on this Tree, if it comes not from this Tree of Life; and yet to a carnal heart every thing but Christ is sweet: Oh such men and women they have lost their taste: when a mans appetite is gone, that's a sign of a great distemper: give him wholsom meats, and pleasant drinks, and he tells you they are bitter and unsavoury, it's a sign of a great distemper of the body, yea many times it's a great fore-runner of death: and truly it's thus with mens souls that taste not of the sweetness of Christ, they have lost their appetite, why? it's wonderful strange they should find no sweetness in Christ: What! sweetness in your profits and pleasures, sweetness in your lusts and harlotry, and what, no sweetness in Christ? Poor creatures, they have lost their taste, and the Lord grant it be not a fore-runner of eternal death; you have a wo denounced against such men in *Isa.* 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter:* Wo to them that call the Tree of Life bitter fruit, unsavoury fruit, whose souls find no sweetness in the feeding upon it, and in the mean time find sweetness and delight in those things which are indeed bitter, for the fruit of sin is bitter fruit: Oh that such men would consider these two things:

1. First of all, What will you do when your desirable fruit is taken from you? There was a threatening against *Babylon* in *Rev.* 18. 14. *And the fruit*

fruits that thy soul lusted after, are departed from thee, and all things which were goodly and dainty are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all: The time will come when this will be spoken to Contemners of Christ, the despisers of that fruit which grows upon this Tree of Life: all thy desirable fruit is departed from thee, that which thou tookest most delight in, it's departed from thee; the Lord he can easily blast your fruit, and cause it to wither: if the Spirit of the Lord do but blow upon your comforts they are gone, they are gone in a moment, they wither and they fall off immediately, and what will such men do when their fruit is departed from them, if they have not better fruit to live upon?

2. Secondly, Again, Oh that such men would consider that fearful threatening against despisers of the fruit of the Tree of Life, in *Prov.* 1. 31. *Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices:* They shall eat the fruit of their own doings, when they will not listen to Wisdoms call; oh my friends it will be very sowr fruit for a man to eat the fruit of his own waies: the fruit that grows in the High-way side it's but sowr fruit, take heed that you despise not the Tree of Life, lest the Lord say you shall not eat thereof. That's the first Use of Conviction.

2. Again, Secondly, Here is a word of Invitation, and I shall propound it in the words of the Psalmist, in *Psal.* 31. 8. a gracious Invitation, *O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him:* You have heard of the fruit that grows upon Christ, and now oh my friends come taste, and see how good the Lord is; the Psalmist speaks as a man that had found a good morsel, found some dainty food,

food, he was eating of it alone, he found a great deal of sweetness in it, and he calls his friends, Oh friends come and taste, and see how good it is; if you did but taste of this meat, you would say, Oh taste and see how good the Lord is, there is pleasure and sweetness, there's enough to take up all your affections, and all your senses, here you may see and taste, you may see beauty and taste sweetness: the Tree of Life is not only beautiful, good to look upon, beautiful to the eye, but it's good for food; let me tell you, it's not enough to see the beauty of the Tree of Life, it's not enough to look upon it, it's not enough to see, but your souls must taste, you will never be the better for the fruit that grows upon Christ unless you taste it, unless you come and feed experimentally upon Christ: it's not enough to hear that the Lord is good, it's not enough that you have heard that there is so much pleasant fruit grows upon Christ, but as ever you desire to be nourished, comforted, revived, strengthened and quickened, why then come here and taste and see how good the Lord is: it's mercy that you have an Invitation; it was a direful threatening in *Luk.* 14. 24. *For I say unto you, that none of these men which were bidden shall taste of my Supper:* That they which were bidden as Guests should never taste of my fruit; the Lord doth not speak this to you this day, he doth not say, You shall never taste of his fruit, but he gives you an Invitation, Oh then come and taste and see the goodness of God. Let me tell you by way of motive, That there is nothing in the world will do away the cursed and bitter taste of sin, but only the taste of the fruit of this Tree. Poor sinners you know not what the taste of the fruit of sin is: oh what bitterness many times doth sin leave behind! It's sweet in the commission, whilst men are committing sin, whilst men

are

are in the midst of their lusts, in the midst of their vanities, in the midst of their cups, sin is sweet, but oh the bitterness, the poyson of Asps that sin leaves behind in the Conscience; you have tried it may be to put out the taste of sin, to do away the bitterness that sin hath left behind, and you swallow many a good Ordinance after it, many a good duty, as you have supposed, you have washed with your own tears, and yet the taste of sin is left behind: and truly Brethren no wonder; there is nothing in the world will do away the taste, the bitter taste of sin, but only the taste of the fruit of Christ: O come and taste of this fruit, it will leave a sweet relish behind, it will leave a taste in your souls and consciences, that shall alwaies be above and prevail against the bitter taste of sin.

Nay further, let me tell you, there is nothing else can sweeten your affliction, there is nothing else can sweeten your temptations, and your trials, but only a taste of the fruit of Christ, this will take away all the bitterness: and therefore I beseech you make good provision for your selves against you take those bitter Pills; you will have something that is sweet by you, to sweeten your mouths against you take bitter Pills: Oh that men would make such provision in and against evil daies; death is bitter in it self, and life is sweet: Oh that the Lord would revive you in giving to you a taste of the Tree of Life, and this will sweeten all afflictions, and it will take away the bitterness of the taste of death: the Martyrs they felt not the heat of the flames, for they had the juice of the Tree of Life in their mouths and souls, and the fruit of the Tree of Life preserved them.

Quest. But how may you know that you have tasted of this fruit of the Tree of Life?

Answ.

Answ. You may know it by your desires after Christ: when the soul hath tasted of the fruit of Christ, it desires to taste more of that fruit, and it will see an averseness to sin: so did the Spouse of Christ, she sat down and desired to eat (as I told you it was rendred) she sat down and desired to eat, and still to eat, her desires were carried out still after further and further enjoyments and tasts of Christ; when the woman of *Samaria* had tasted of the sweetness of the water of Life, in *John* 14. 15. *Give me to drink of this water that I thirst not:* Give me evermore to drink of this water, she tasted but a drop and this gave her to cry out, O Lord give me evermore to drink of this water: so the soul having once tasted but a taste of this fruit of the Tree of Life, Lord give me evermore to eat of this Tree, of this fruit.

Again, It's known by the contentment, delight and satisfaction, that the soul doth find in Christ, by the tasting of him it hath satisfaction in Christ, a high esteem, and honourable esteem, such an esteem as *David* had: he desired to be a door-keeper in the Courts and House of the Lord: And so the soul that hath tasted of Christ, Oh Lord let me eat of thy fruit, though my condition be never so low, let me sit under thy Tree, though I sit like *Job* on the Dunghil, let me sit down and eat of thy fruit, and it's enough, it satisfies; when it hath Christ, whatever it hath it's satisfied: if it be but the fruit of Christ's love, it's satisfied: if it be but a piece of bread, if it hath the love of Christ with it, I shall say, Lord my lot is fallen on a goodly ground: and thus saith our Saviour, *No man that hath drank old Wine and tastes of new, desires the old again,* because it's bitter to him: so no man that is once in Christ desires to taste of the fruit of sin, because this fruit is better; Oh that many might be convinced of

sin,

sin, such as wallow in their lusts, and take more delight in their lusts than in Christ, that have not yet tasted of the fruit of this Tree of Life, the Invitation is even to them, unto such that they might come in and taste, and see how good the Lord is. So much for the first Use.

2. *Use.* Secondly, A word of Exhortation to those that have interest in Christ. O that you would come and sit under this Tree and eat: That Christians would sit more under Christ, and eat more of his fruit. It's not enough to give a pluck and away, a snatch and away: but the Spouse she sat and pluckt and eat. Christ doth not love a hasting gesture, he doth not love souls hast in plucking of his fruit: he doth not love they should post over Communion with him, but that they should sit down and eat. Oh chew well upon the Tree of Life, that you may find that sweetness, that infinite sweetness that is in it: Oh that you would pluck much of the fruit of this Tree; you that have interest in Christ, pluck much of this fruit, and eat much of this fruit; let me tell you, there is more fruit grows upon one bough than you can pluck all your daies, and make no spare; there is more fruit grows upon one bough than you can pluck throughout all Eternity; Oh that you would every day be plucking a little; continually plucking and eating some of the fruit that grows upon this Tree of Life, it's but a taste that you can have, and therefore you had need be often, and alwaies tasting of that fruit which is in him.

Besides, you can have but a taste of this sweetness, yet this taste is exceeding comfortable, reviving and strengthening; I say that very taste it's exceeding comfortable and reviving, there is no fruit so full of spirit as this fruit that grows upon the Lord Jesus; and it's full of strength, it will strengthen your souls abundantly;

dantly; you may know it's very nouriſhing by the ſweetneſs of it: Phyſicians ſay, That which taſtes well, it nouriſhes well, and if ſo, I am ſure this fruit is nouriſhing fruit, for it hath the ſweeteſt taſte, it hath the moſt delightful taſte. O the ſudden ſtrength that the taſte of this fruit hath conveyed unto poor weak and weary ſouls, to ſuch as have been ſpent almoſt in their combates, and ready to faint and give up the Ghoſt, their ſpirits have been ready to fail within them, and the Lord hath given but one taſte of this fruit, ſome fruit or other, the fruit of his death, or the fruit of his Reſurrection, Aſcenſion or Mediation, and it hath given new ſtrength, and new Life to the poor ſoul, and it hath made it ſtand up and leap for joy: it crept upon the earth before, and now it mounts up like the Eagle. Oh this excellent fruit that is in Chriſt, it's worth the plucking, and it's worth the eating.

Beſides, you may well pluck much of this fruit (you that have intereſt in Chriſt) you have all the advantage that can be; you have the ſhadow over you whilſt you pluck it, and whilſt you eat it, you need not labour much, and toil much, for the Lord (with this Tree) will be a ſhadow to you, you may pluck with delight, and eat with delight under his ſhadow, he will keep off his fathers diſpleaſure, you may eat and pluck, and eat with delight, and need not fear ſurfeit, all the fruit is fully ripe, here Chriſt hath bidden you eat without fear. It's the ſin of ſome, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, that they eat without fear: but here's the commendation of this fruit, you may eat without fear. Men may eat too much of the fruit of this world, and get a ſurfeit, it may coſt many a Life and Soul, but here Gods people may ſtill pluck and eat, and eat and pluck, and eat abundantly.

3. *Uſe.*

3. *Use.* Thirdly, This Doctrine calls the Saints to thankfulness: Oh bless the Lord that he hath made such provision for you, that he hath provided such a Tree as this, that you may eat here, and eat in heaven, and for ever feed upon it, and be comforted, and satisfied; What do you owe to the Lord, you that are the people of the Lord? What do you owe to the Lord for his mercy? I say, what shall you render unto the Lord for all his loving kindness, when you pluck, and when you eat; look upward, I say eat and look upward. Do not eat as the Swine eat under the Tree and never look up from whence it comes; it's a sin to receive any mercy, so to take them as not to look up; but when you eat of the fruit of this Tree, Oh lift up your hearts and look up unto Christ and be thankful; do but consider what poor creatures you are, what need you have of this fruit, you had starved, your souls had starved and famished for ever, if Christ had not been a fruitful Tree, all the creatures could not have given you fruit for your souls to feed on. I tell you the fruit that is upon the creature, is vanity, it's perishing, they could not have nourished you up to eternal life; Oh you had famished, you had fainted, you had perished; and when you were in this fainting perishing condition, he sprang up as a Tree in the Wilderness, as a Tree in the Forest; he sprang up in your fainting and wildred conditions, he sprang up and became a fruitful Tree unto your nourishment. And do you but consider what unfruitful Trees you were to Christ, when Christ became a fruitful Tree unto you; Oh the cursed fruit that you brought forth to him, you brought forth nothing but sin and death, there's all the fruit that you brought to him, you brought forth sin to him, and brought forth death to your selves:

Oh

Oh that ever the Lord Christ should be a Tree of Life unto you, you that were Trees of death unto your selves, and Trees of Death unto him: your sins put him to death: That ever he should be a Tree of Life unto you, and be a Tree to bring forth such fruit, such peace, such pardon, such joy, such strength, oh the infinite love of Christ to you! Why certainly Christ deserves a great rent for his fruit; it's said in *Cant.* 8. 11, 12. That *Solomon* had a Vineyard, and he let it out for a thousand pieces of Silver; if *Solomon* had so much for his fruit, what deserves Christ for his fruit? Oh the thousand pieces of Silver, the thousand Hosannahs, the thousand Halleluja's, and thousand praises that are due to Christ for his fruit!

Well, I beseech you, give Christ of his own fruit, I say give him of his own fruit: he requires nothing from you, but what you may pluck from his own Tree; give him his own fruit: as it's said of *Cain*, as wicked as he was, when the Lord blessed the ground, he brought of the fruit of the ground and presented it as an offering unto the Lord; and now if *Cain* brought the fruit of the ground, should not you bring the fruit of the Tree? The Lord hath given you all the fruit of the Tree to eat of; Oh bring of the fruit of the Tree as a Sacrifice that the Lord hath given you so freely to eat of; know that all your mercies come from this Tree, and therefore look that all your mercies, liberties and comforts grow upon this Tree: Oh then acknowledge Christ in all, and say with *David*, *O Lord all things come of thee, and of thine own have I given thee:* So go and return all these mercies to Christ; if thou hast any thing that is good, say, Lord this grew upon thy Tree, and I

am beholding to Christ for it: if thou hast any grace, any strength, any ability, any opportunity to do for God, to serve thy Generation, say, Blessed be Christ for it, it's none of my fruit, but it's Christs fruit, this strength and that grace, it grew upon that Tree, I bless the Lord for it; Oh be taken up with admiration, with holy admiration; there is a world of precious fruit that grows upon Christ: you have heard but a little of it, oh be taken up with admiration, continually be taken up with thanksgiving and acknowledgement, give all back again to Christ, and by that little, that little sight of the goodness, and the little taste of the sweetness that the Lord now gives you of the Tree of life, rise higher, do not rest here, but be rising higher and higher, and say, Oh Lord if the fruit be so sweet, what's the Tree it self? How excellent and glorious is the Lord Jesus Christ the Tree of life, from whence such precious fruit doth grow? Rest not upon any thing but Christ, and be still ascending higher and higher, and say, Lord if this fruit, the fruit that I now taste be so sweet, what is the fruit that I shall taste of in heaven? If I taste of the fruit of the lowest boughs, and they be so sweet, what is the fruit that grows upon the top branches, which is reserved for the Saints to pluck, and to eat of when they shall come unto heaven? And thus I have given you in part to see the meaning of these words, and how usefully they may be enlarged in your own Meditation, and remember the Text, it's worthy you should spend many thoughts upon it: *As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my beloved among the sons; I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

SEE-

SERMON I.

MATT. 18. 21, 22.

Then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times: but until seventy times seven.

HEre is *Peter*'s Question unto Christ about the Forgiving of Offences, and Christs Answer unto *Peter*'s Question; you must know that the Question, and so the Answer relates unto particular offences, personal offences, such wrongs and injuries as are done by one man unto another. As for those which are more immediately against God, and more publick, Christ doth give another rule in this Chapter: but this, I say, is concerning personal offences or wrongs which are done by one man unto another. *How often shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive?* It is true, every such offence is a sin against God, and so far as it is a sin against God, there is no man can forgive:

the Lord only can forgive sin, he against whom the sin is committed: but now there is an offence or wrong which is done against man, and so far as the offence is against man, man may forgive; man cannot forgive Gods part, but so far as the offence is against man, man may forgive it: nay Christians ought to forgive it, so far to forgive it as not to seek any revenge for the wrong done. How often shall my Brother sin or offend against me? By *Brother* here we are to understand any relation, any friend, any neighbour, any man that we have to do with; if that he hath done any wrong or any offence, he's comprehended under this relation of a *Brother*: any man, for we are all Brethren. *How often shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?* there is *Peter*'s Limitation: he seems to give an answer to himself, for it comes short of the answer of Christ: Shall I forgive him so often, saies *Peter*? Lord! what shall I forgive him seven times? It seems to be hard to forgive a brother seven times: but see how Christs answer doth exceed *Peter's*, Christ will have no such bounds set as seven times, *I say not unto thee, till seven times, but until seventy times seven:* As if Christ should say, Wherefore dost thou say seven times, to set the bounds of thy forgiveness seven times to thy brother? I'le have no such bounds given: you think it a great matter to forgive seven times, I say unto you, That it is the Will of my Father that you forgive until seventy times seven: a certain number for an uncertain; seventy times seven, that is, I will have you to multiply forgiveness: not that Christ himself doth set bounds to seventy times seven, that they should proceed so far and no further: but I will have you to forgive very often, nay, as often as thy brother doth offend, not seven times, but I say seventy

times

times seven. That which I shall observe at this time is this:

Doct. How far the thoughts of the Lord and the waies of the Lord are beyond our waies and our thoughts in this matter of forgiveness; *Peter* thought seven times for a man to forgive an offending brother, was a great matter, but seventy times seven was not enough; and know that what the Lord Christ doth here give in as a duty unto *Peter*, and to all the Disciples, that the Lord Jesus himself doth assert as his prerogative in the matters of forgiveness, in the matter of forgiving offences and transgressions. The Lords thoughts and the Lords waies are infinitely above ours. This truth I shall handle at this time, to make way for that main Doctrine of the Text, which is the Doctrine of Forgiveness, forgiving Offences. Now that the Lords thoughts, and the Lords waies, are so far above ours, it is clear from Scripture, *Isa.* 55. 7, 8, 9. see it was in the matter of forgiveness this is spoken: *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your waies my waies, saith the Lord: for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my waies higher than your waies, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Though you cannot think that I should multiply pardon, you think seven times hard, but the Lord can multiply unto seventy times seven; the Lords waies are not as your waies, nor his thoughts as yours, for his thoughts are above your thoughts, as the heavens are above the earth; now this shews us how far short we do imitate the Lord in forgiving others: For

1. First of all, The Lord when he forgives, he forgives those that are *enemies*; this will advance the exceeding riches of the Lords grace; I say the Lord when he forgives, he forgives enemies, for so is every man by nature; neither can any man lay down that enmity that is in the heart, till such time as the Lord Christ brings home a pardon, that is the first work and the ground of all that the Lord doth for a soul, and of what it doth for him: *I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.* Now how far are the thoughts and waies of the Lord above our thoughts and waies in this matter of forgiveness! Christ he forgives enemies, he brings home forgiving mercy unto enemies, and reconciles the enmity that is in their hearts; But oh how far come we short? we are so far from forgiving enemies, as we can scarce forgive friends, hard to forgive a brother, a dear and near relation: Oh how far do we come short of Christ in that?

Secondly, The Lord when he forgives offences and transgressions to a poor soul, he forgives *freely*: and the freeness of the Lords forgiveness, will appear in these particulars.

1. First, In that the Lord is *alwaies ready to forgive*, there is a propensity in the heart of the Lord to pardon poor sinners that come in to him, he is ready to it, God is never unready; it discovers the freeness of the Lord in this work; the Psalmist speaks of the Lord in *Psal.* 86. 5. *For thou Lord art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon him.* Of tender mercies, God is never unready for this work, alwaies ready, ready to forgive, the heart of God is never out of tune, never out of frame for this work, never unready for this

this work, alwaies ready to forgive: but oh, how far are the waies of the Lord above our waies, for this, and his thoughts above our thoughts? Where is the man, or where is the woman whose heart is ready to forgive, whose heart is never out of tune, never out of frame for this work of forgiving wrongs, injuries and offences unto them that they do commit them? The Lord he is ready to forgive. It may be at last a man may be drawn off to forgive a man when friends have dealt with him, when he hath been urging it on his own heart to be his duty, when he hath taken pains with his own soul, and brought the Word home to his soul, and hath smarted for this unreadiness to forgive: but oh, where is the man or woman that looks unto God, whose heart is never out of tune, but alway ready to forgive?

2. Secondly, The freeness of the Lords forgiveness appears thus, In that he is not only ready to forgive, but he forgives at the desire of the poor creature; no sooner doth a poor creature express his desire, but the Lord is ready to express his willingness, set forth in the Parable of the wicked Servant in *Mat.* 18. 32. *I forgave thee because thou desiredst me*; not that this his desire was the cause of forgiveness, but it expresst the readiness of the Lord at his desire to come in, and to manifest pardon unto him. Now I pray let us consider how far the thoughts of the Lord, and the waies of the Lord in this particular are above ours: for the Lord forgives that which is desired; but oh, where is the man almost that can so easily forgive at the desire of him that offends? hardly brought off, although the party offending doth desire it, although friends have desired him, and relations have desired him, and God hath desired him, and Christ hath desired him, yet how hardly are they brought off to this work?

3. Again, Thirdly, The Lord forgives freely: it appears thus, He doth forgive upon the confession of his people, he is ready to manifest his pardoning and forgiving love, 1 *Joh.* 1.9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins:* And hereby I say it appears that he forgives freely, in that he forgives upon the very confession of his people, though not for confession, and not for desire, as I said before; but yet in this way the Lord is pleased to manifest forgiveness; no sooner doth the poor soul confess, but he presently forgives: *I have sinned,* saies *David*; *The Lord hath done away thy sin,* saies the Prophet presently, that is the next word. Now how far is the way of the Lord above ours? Where is the man that is ready to forgive upon a confession? Yea, although there be an acknowledgement of the wrong done, yet how hard a matter is it for a poor creature to pass by that wrong? Thus, how much are we unlike to God?

4. Fourthly, Nay further, the freeness of Gods forgiving mercy appears in this, He doth forgive *presently, as soon as his people look towards him*; he doth not make long delay about the business, he doth not stand to consider whether he shall forgive such offences or no, but presently gives out pardon: *I have sinned,* saies *David,* and in the next words, *The Lord hath done away thine iniquity:* Now how far is the way of the Lord above us in this? Where is the man or woman that can find in their heart to forgive presently the wrong or injury done? Oh there must be a great deal of do to bring off the heart to this work to forgive. It may be in length of time mens hearts may be perswaded, through a long time they may forgive and forget: but oh where is the working of grace, to bring off the hearts of men to forgive presently?

ſently? truly in this we come far ſhort of God, and the way and thoughts of God.

5. Fifthly, Nay further, The freeneſs of God in forgiving a poor ſinner, appears in this, He doth *prevent poor ſinful creatures with pardoning mercy*, Even before they do deſire, he prevents their deſire, their ſupplication for mercy, he brings in a pardon to a poor ſoul, before it hath made any real acknowledgement of its offence: *I ſaid I will confeſs my ſin unto the Lord*, Pſal. 32. 5. *And thou forgaveſt me the iniquity of my ſin*; *David* did but ſay it in his heart, he had but ſuch a thought, ſuch a purpoſe in his ſoul; well, I will return unto the Lord, and I will confeſs: And before *David* could do it, the Lord he prevents him, he prevents him with mercy. And ſo another Inſtance you have of the Prodigal in *Luk.* 15. He ſaid he would go to his Father and make his confeſſion; at the 18 Verſe, *I will ariſe and go to my Father, and ſay, Father I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee*, &c. and then at the 20 Verſe it is ſaid, *He aroſe and came to his Father. But when he was yet a great way off, his Father ſaw him, and had compaſſion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kiſſed him.* Mark how the compaſſion of the Father did prevent the confeſſion of the Son, *I will go to my Father, and ſay, Father I have ſinned* ſo and ſo, but before he could utter one word, the Father falls upon his neck and kiſſeth him, and forgives his many and great tranſgreſſions, and then indeed afterward he doth make an humble acknowledgement: And thus the Lord doth deal with poor ſinners, he doth prevent them with pardon, before they can acknowledge their tranſgreſſion; and how far is the way of the Lord above the way of man in this? Where is the man or woman that will deal thus with an offending brother,

with

with one that hath done him wrong and injury, that will prevent their desire, and prevent their confession? but men will rather stand upon it, and think they have rather warrant so to do: If my brother confess and acknowledge his offence, then it may be we think it our duty to forgive, though hardly to bring off our hearts to that: but where there is no confession and acknowledgement, where is the man like the Prodigals Father, to run and meet his son, and seal up forgiveness before confession, or an acknowledgement? This shews that the way of the Lord in matters of forgiveness is far above man, the Lord forgives enemies, and the Lord forgives freely. But,

3. Thirdly, The Lords waies are above ours, it appears in that the Lord forgives *fully*: He doth not only forgive freely those whom he doth forgive, but the Lord forgives poor sinners fully: I shall make it out in these particulars. As

1. First, The Lord he doth forgive *all the debt*: When God doth forgive a soul, he doth forgive all offences, all transgressions and sins whatsoever: *I forgave thee all the debt*; he doth not forgive one sin to the soul, and leave the other to reckon with him for, and to condemn him for; but where the Lord forgives one, he forgives all, else the forgiveness of the Lord were not full. There are some that think indeed that God may forgive a soul one sin, and yet reckon with him for other sins: as the *Arminians* say, That God forgives Original sin to all the World, and yet condemns for actual sin; but this is contrary unto the fullness of that grace of forgiveness: As Jesus Christ died for sins against the Law, so he died for the sin of Unbelief; and when God forgives the sin of the Law, he forgives Unbelief, and overcomes Unbelief, else it were in vain for God to forgive transgression: though God

God could forgive all transgressions against the Law, yet if God did not forgive transgression against the Gospel, we had been shut up eternally for that sin; but when God forgives one sin, he forgives all sins, and herein is the fulness of his pardon; But oh how short is our way of Gods way in this particular! A man can find in his heart to forgive some wrong, but to forgive all the wrong that a man hath done, this is a hard work: how hardly is the heart of man brought off to this work?

2. Secondly, Nay again, The fulness of Gods forgiving mercy, it appears in this, He doth not only forgive all the offences, where the offences are few, but he forgives them all where they are many. If the soul be brought home to Christ the great Mediator, the great Sacrifice, the Lord forgives for all sins though never so many, *Luk.* 7. 47. *She loved much, because much was forgiven her*; though her sins were very many, yet they were forgiven her fully: we can forgive a brother, a Neighbour, or a friend if they have done us but a few wrongs, but now when offences come to be multiplied, suppose they were many, Oh how hard a matter is it to us to forgive them, though easie with a Almighty God? But

3. Thirdly, Again, The fulness of Gods forgiving mercy doth appear, in that he doth *forgive the greatest wrong*. He doth not only forgive many when they are *small*, but he forgives many when they are *great*: and herein I say is the greatness of the grace and of the love of God towards poor sinners, that although offences be never so great, he pardons and forgives them all, *Though your sins be as scarlet, yet they shall be made as white as snow*, Isa. 1. 18. This is it that aggravates the offences of his people, in *Isa.* 43. 24. *Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me*

me with thine inquities; yet this follows at the 25 Verse, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my Name sake, and will not remember thy sins*; this was it that did aggravate the offences of his people, thou hast made me to serve with thy sins. God he forgives their sins though they were so great, that God was oppressed under them as a servant under a heavy burden, and yet saith the Lord, *I, even I am he that blotteth them out:* Oh how short is our way of the way of God? It may be a man may forgive offences when they be small, but when they come to apprehend them great, they are great wrongs done unto him, and never was any wronged as I am, by such a one, and such a friend: Oh how hard a matter then is it to imitate God in forgiving such great wrongs?

4. Fourthly, But again further, The fulness of Gods forgiving mercy appears in this, He so forgives his people as *He retains no grudge in his heart against his people*, nothing but clearness in the heart of God toward his people; *Joseph* was one that forgave his Brethren so freely as he never retained any grudge: he takes off their aggravation; it was not you, but God that sent me hither, therefore be not offended: *Joseph* herein was a Type of Christ, he forgave his Brethren so fully as he bore no grudge against them, we never read that he upbraided his brethren so much as once, for all the wrong they had done to him, there was no grudge in the heart of *Joseph* against his brethren, there was nothing but clearness in his heart, and so nothing but clearness in the heart of God: But oh how do we fall short of God? Men may profess forgiveness, O they forgive their Neighbour such a wrong: but oh is there not still some old grudge at the bottom that is ready to break out upon all occasions? How short do we come of God in this respect? Nay

5. Fifthly,

5. Fifthly, Further, The fulneſs of Gods forgiveneſs doth appear in this, That he doth not bear any grudge, he will not only not upbraid, but *He doth receive thoſe whom he forgives into neareſt friendſhip and fellowſhip with himſelf.* Though man did greatly ſin againſt God in *Adam*, and brake his firſt Covenant, the Lord he enters into another Covenant, a ſecond Covenant, and in that Covenant he gives his people a nearer admittance unto himſelf than formerly in his firſt Covenant, nearer in Chriſt in the ſecond *Adam* than in the firſt; and truly when ever the Lord doth forgive a poor ſoul, and paſs by the failings and infirmities of his people, the wrongs and injuries which they do commit againſt him daily, yet he carries it as fairly and as friendly with them, as if they had never broke Covenant with him; ſo did Chriſt to *Peter*, though he did wrong and injury to Chriſt, yet the Lord Jeſus he doth admit him as near as formerly, he doth not only not upbraid him, but look upon him as his dear friend. Now how far is this way of God above our waies and thoughts? It may be you will forgive a man that hath done you wrong, yea, but you will not truſt him; he was once your friend, but you will never truſt him with your ſecrets again, you will have an eye upon him, and watch over him as long as ever he lives: Oh! how far ſhort are we in our forgiveneſs, of the forgiveneſs of God? But

Again, The Lord he doth not only forgive freely and fully, but he forgives ſincerely, with all his heart; I will do you good with all my heart and ſoul: ſo the Lord doth not only profeſs with his lips, he doth not only ſpeak it in word, but the heart of God goes along with it, with every word of pardon: *I know my thoughts towards you*, in *Jer.* 29. 11. *they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*;

end; he doth not only speak peace, but his heart is full of peace. Oh how sincerely doth God forgive! there is no hypocrisie, no dissimulation, no deceit in Gods forgiveness: but oh how unlike are we in our thoughts and waies to God in this? There is many a man professes, ay, he doth forgive, he doth forgive another that hath done him wrong, but his heart doth not go along with his word, though he cannot but for shame professe, yet a mans heart doth check him, and tell him, he doth not really forgive even as God forgives, *Psal.* 55. 21. *Their words are smoother than Oyl*, peaceable words, *but war is in their heart*: when a man is put upon it by being urged to it to forgive, it's a shame, not to confess forgiveness, but it is not from the heart. But

Again, When God forgives he *forgives unchangeably*: When God pardons, he doth not pardon to day, and call it in to morrow again: he doth not pardon to day and recall it to morrow: *I will be merciful to their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more, I will blot them out as a Cloud, as a thick Cloud*; A Cloud that is blown away and scattered that it never come again, so doth the Lord give out pardon, he forgives unchangeably. Indeed the Papists, and some that follow them in that way, God he may forgive, say they, and yet visit for transgressions, and afterward such may fall away, and God may call to account and visit for all sins: but this is contrary to sound Doctrin. That which is urged by them for the proof of this their Assertion is that Parable in *Matth.* 18. that was spoken upon this occasion of forgiving: some plead (upon this Parable) that God may forgive a man all his sins, and yet afterwards calling him to account may reckon with him for those very sins: It speaks of a certain man who ought his Lord ten thousand Talents,

but

but his Lord forgave him all the debt, and immediately he went forth and fell upon his fellow servant which ought him an hundred pence, and took him by the throat and cast him into prison, till he should pay all the debt; whereupon it is said, *When his Lord heard thereof, he was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.* Now from this Parable some plead, That a man may be pardoned, and afterwards God may reckon with him for those very sins. But by way of Answer,

1. First, Know it is dangerous to strain every Parable: we are in Parables to look to that which is the main scope; it is not that God forgives sins, and then calls to account afterward for them again; the scope of the Parable is, That no man can know he is pardoned of God, but that man that is ready to forgive wrongs and injuries done unto him: But yet they will urge particularly this Parable, that the debt was forgiven, and yet he called to an account.

2. Secondly, I answer to that, That the Lord may forgive some temporal punishment; when God removes a man or a people from temporal punishment, then God is said to deliver from sin, and so far this servant was forgiven, and any a person may be forgiven so far, God may give out a promise of the removal of some temporal punishment, as he did upon *Ahab* his outward confession; a man may be so far forgiven, that temporal punishment for a while may be repealed and held back, and a man by his own folly may pull down some greater wrath. And then

3. Thirdly, Again, He was never made partaker of that pardoning mercy which the Covenant holds forth, which appears by the frame of his Spirit after he was pardoned, Verse 26. *Lord have patience with me, and I will pay thee all*; it was no more than the forgiving

of

of some temporal punishment: he knew not what did belong to the Covenant of Grace, he was ignorant of Gods way in forgiving sin, he was a Legalist; certainly this man was never acquainted with the Covenant of Grace, he did not know that he was a poor weak man, and altogether unable to make satisfaction to his Lord. And then

Again, He was never made partaker of that pardoning mercy which the Covenant of Grace holds forth, as appears by the frame of his Spirit after he was pardoned. It was no more than the forgiving of some temporal punishment, his sin was not pardoned by the Covenant of Grace, for if it had, he would have acted more mildly, and not so irregularly, and dealt so harshly with his fellow servant.

And it appears in that other word, in the 32 Verse, *O thou wicked servant*; so that he was never made righteous with the righteousness of Christ, for there he is called the wicked servant: so that you see notwithstanding what was objected, that the Lord whenever he doth forgive a soul, he doth forgive unchangeably, he doth not cross the score to day, and then call to an account for the same another day, but whom he pardons, he pardons for ever: how far short is our way of forgiveness unto Gods? How hard a matter is it to forgive unchangeably? *David* did forgive for a time, when *Shimei* cursed him, then he made an humble acknowledgement, but upon another occasion he commands his son *Solomon* to fall upon him, that *Shimei*'s head might not go in peace to the Grave: You see then that the point is made good, that the thoughts of the Lord, and the waies of the Lord in the matter of forgiveness, are far above the thoughts and the waies of man; *Peter* thinks seven times to be a great matter, but Christ saies, not seven times, but seventy times seven.

ven. A word for Application in brief to shut up all.

1. *Use.* Here is incouragement for poor sinners to come in to Christ, there is mercy and forgiveness with him that he may be feared, and the thoughts and waies of the Lord in this particular, they are as far above your thoughts and waies as the heavens are above the earth; and oh what a wide open door is here! That the Lord would perswade some poor guilty soul to come in to Christ by this door of mercy, forgiveness and plenteous redemption: though you have been enemies, and though your hearts be still filled with enmity against God, yet know that the Lord is able to forgive enemies, and though you have nothing in the world to procure your acceptance, you can do nothing that should commend you to God; yet know that the Lord he forgives freely, and though your transgressions have been multiplied, though very many, though very great, though you have made the Lord to serve with your sins, and wearied him with your iniquities, yet he is able to blot them out freely for his own name sake: Oh then that the Lord would perswade your hearts to come, and to submit to Christ, and not to go on in the way of rebellion, and take hold of that great propitiatory sacrifice, and then you shall know that the Lord forgives, for he forgives you cordially and sincerely; he doth so forgive your transgressions, as he will never remember them more.

2. *Use.* And it speaks a word of comfort and refreshment unto such poor souls as are in dark and sad conditions: some poor souls that have look'd to Christ for righteousness, and yet are found sitting in darkness and oppressed with the weight of sin; and becaus (it may be) when you look into your own hearts, you find they are very narrow, when you are put upon this work of forgiving another, you are hardly brought off

to it, and certainly the Lord may for this withdraw himself; Oh know you have sinned after profession, and you have sinned much, yea you have sinned much against light, and that is that which cuts and makes great gashes: but yet know that the Lord gave Commandment to *Peter* and his Disciples to forgive seventy times seven; certainly that command which the Lord gave to man to forgive seventy times seven, he will certainly forgive poor creatures though their sins be numberless. This is not to spur on to sin, this is no word to invite to sin: but this word of forgiveness is to the end the Lord may be feared and admired for his great grace; and take heed poor creatures you wrong not God of that which is his greatest glory: It is the glory of a man to forgive seventy times seven, and the oftner the more like unto God; now do not rob God of his glory, that infinite mercy which put him upon it to forgive seventy times seven; say therefore as the Church did in *Mic.* 7. 18, 19. *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy: he will turn again, he will have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depth of the Sea.* You may look upon your transgressions, nay you ought to look upon your sins, nay and to lye low because of your provocations, and abhorr your selves in dust and ashes, you can never lye too low in the consideration of your own vileness, none have sinned against so many aggravations, and sinned against so much light and conviction; when you have thus aggravated your sin, do not rob God of his glory, but say with the Prophet, *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity*, that forgiveth great iniquities, and many iniquities, who forgives seventy times seven.

3. *Yf.*

3. *Use.* Laſtly, This ſhould be matter of great humiliation, that our thoughts and our waies are ſo beneath the thoughts and waies of God in the matter of forgiveneſs; *Peter* thought it a great matter, What to forgive ſeven times? *Peter*'s number is very ſhort of Chriſts number. Yet where is the man or woman that is come to *Peter*'s number? and yet *Peter*'s number was ſhort of Chriſts number: Oh what cauſe have we to be humbled? One of the Evangeliſts hath it, *If thy brother offend thee ſeven times in a day, and ſay, I repent, thou ſhalt forgive him*; Oh how far are we from forgiving ſeven times in a day? We are ſo far from forgiving ſeven offences in one day, as we many times remember one offence ſeven daies, nay ſeven years together; Oh how unlike is this to Chriſt? Oh let us therefore labour to walk up to the rule, or elſe never profeſs our ſelves to be Chriſts Diſciples. And ſo much for this time.

SERMON II.

MATT. 18. 21, 22.

Then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times: but until seventy times seven.

I Made entrance before into these words: Here is *Peter's* Question and Christs Answer concerning the forgiving of offences, particular wrongs and personal injuries which are done to any man or woman. *Peter* propounds the Question, and seems to forestall Christs Answer, by giving an Answer to it himself, which Christ did not approve of. But I proceed to the main Doctrin, which is this:

Doct. That the often forgiving of wrongs and injuries, is a duty which Christ commends unto, and commands all his Disciples to follow: I say until seventy times seven.

1. First, I shall clear this Point to you from Scripture, and shew you from the word of the Lord, That this is a duty that is incumbent upon all that profess themselves to be Christs Disciples.

2. Secondly, I shall hold forth unto you divers Examples

amples of worthy and gracious men, who have practised this Duty.

3. Thirdly, And then shew you upon what ground Christ doth commend and command this Duty.

1. First, Look into the Proverbs of *Solomon*, where Wisdom speaks, which is Christ, *Prov.* 24. 29. *Say not I will do so to him, as he hath done unto me, I will render unto a man according unto his works.* Mark, here is the Counsel Wisdom gives unto all her Children, *Say not I will do so to him as he hath done unto me:* Do not say, I will be revenged of him for the wrong he hath done to me: do not say, I will give to him as good as he brings, I will recompence him according to his work; say not so, no, Christ will tell you, and Wisdom will teach all her scholars to unsay this Lesson, you must learn to forget this Lesson, *I will do unto him as he hath done unto me*, say not so; if you will be Wisdoms Scholars, you must learn to unsay this Lesson; indeed flesh and blood saies so, and corrupt nature will bid you say so, *I will do to him as he hath done to me*, I will never put up these wrongs: Flesh and Blood will not put up these wrongs: and the Devil will put you on to do as you say, but Christ would not have you. If you would be Wisdoms Scholars fear to purpose this in your hearts, much less to act; Why? what then must we do? See but what Wisdom invites us unto in *Matth.* 5. 39, 44. *I say unto you resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also*; and again, *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.* Here Christ tells you what you should say, and what you should do in case of wrongs and injuries, namely, to render good for evil, it is the best way: look into *Luk.* 17. Christ would teach you your lesson

if you would be his Disciples; *Take heed to your selves*, saies Christ, *take heed:* Ay but what should we take heed of? He doth not bid them take heed of the wrongs and injuries that others do unto them, that's not the matter Christ bids them take heed to; no, but take heed to *your selves*, look to your hearts, watch over your affections, and over your passions; when any wrong and injury is done unto you, then you have need to take heed to your selves, you do no resist evil, take heed you do not meditate revenge: you are in great danger of sinning against God when wrong is done unto you, and therefore of all other Counsel, now take heed to your selves: see the Epistle to the *Romans* 12. 17, 19, 21. *Recompence no man evil for evil. Avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto wrath*, for it is written, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Mark what counsel Christ gives here by the Apostle to all his Disciples. Be not overcome of evil: When is a man overcome of evil (we are speaking of wrongs) When is a man overcome with evil? Why, when his spirit is put out of frame by the wrongs and injuries he meets withal; when he strives to resist and meditate revenge, then this man is overcome with evil. Whenas a man can pass by the wrongs, pass by an injury that is done, and his soul is drawn forth in pity and compassion towards that man that doth him the wrong: Alas poor man, he hath wronged his own soul more than me, I have cause to pity him more than to seek revenge of him: but now when as a mans p ssion is heightened, to give him as good as he brings, this man is overcome with evil. As it is with Fire and Water: cast water upon the fire, if the fire be quenched with water, and so kept from burning, then we say the fire is overcome: but when the fire doth gather together

gether its force, and doth continue its heat and burning, is as hot after as before, then the fire overcomes the water: wrongs and injuries are as water, now wrongs and injuries being cast upon a man, quench his love, and that duty which he owes unto any man or woman; whenas a man is taken off from his duty, hindred in the performance of his duty, his love is quenched, he cannot perform it: there is duty of love which he may owe to his Neighbour and brother; but now when this shall continue, and he is found doing his duty, though he meet with wrongs and injuries, yet passes them by, and love overcomes them, then doth he overcome evil with good: Take one place more in *Col.* 3. 13. *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. If any man hath a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.* Forbearing and forgiving one another, which is spoken to every man, If any man hath a quarrel, and if it be against any man whatsoever, Yet, saies Christ, it's your duty to forbear, and not only to forbear but also to forgive. A man may forbear, yet not forgive: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, is the pattern that is set before us, which is Christ himself; even as Christ gave himself as a pattern, even so do ye, not only forbear but also forgive.

2. Secondly, But the second work is to shew you the example of many blessed servants of God that have been very eminent in this very duty, very ready to forgive wrongs and injuries which were done by others unto them; and oh that by their example we might be drawn unto a holy imitation of them!

1. *Examp.* And the first Example that I shall mention is *Joseph: Joseph* was a man that had much of the Spirit of God, he was a man that received many wrongs and injuries from his Brethren, they could not

endure him, they hated him, they conſpired againſt him, they ſought to take away his life: when they were prevented in that, then they ſold him, ſold him as a ſlave, and if the Lord had not been the more merciful to him, he had ended his daies in ſlavery and bondage; and this was from his Brethren, and yet we find in *Joſeph* a great readineſs of forgiving all thoſe wrongs and injuries which were done unto him by his Brethren: in *Gen.* 45. 5, 7, 8. *Be not grieved* (ſaies he) *nor angry with your ſelves, that ye ſold me hither, for God did ſend me before you to preſerve life.* And *God ſent me before you, to preſerve you a poſterity in the earth,* and to ſave your lives by a great deliverance; ſo it was not you that ſent me hither but God, *&c.* See how this good man doth not only forgive the wrongs and injuries, but endeavours to comfort his brethren, to take off their fears and to take off their grief: and therefore tells them, theſe three times together, it was not you but God, God ſent me hither, and God ſent me hither, and God ſent me for gracious ends; not a word that favours of any grudge, or any ſpirit of Revenge: Nay, afterward whenas old *Jacob* their Father was dead, they might think now *Joſeph* would remember their old unkindneſſes now their Father is dead; in *Gen.* 50. 19 *But as for you, ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it unto good*; they beſought him that he would not remember their old unkindneſs: *Fear not, am I in the place of God?* Do you think I will take upon me to revenge the wrong, to revenge an injury? that were to ſet my ſelf in the place of God, *Vengeance is mine,* ſaies *God,* and *I will repay it:* God forbid that I ſhould ſet my ſelf in the place of God, you need not fear that I will do you wrong, that I will revenge me of you, God hath turned it for good, God

hath

hath turned it for good to you and me and more people, and therefore God forbid that I should take upon me, to turn that into evil which God hath made for good.

2. *Examp.* A second Example for our imitation: And that is *Moses*, a man full of the Spirit of God, a man that had great acquaintance and familiarity with God, God spake with him face to face; now *Moses* he was very ready to forgive all personal wrongs and injuries. Many times when the Children of *Israel* murmured against him, they laid all upon him: Thou hast brought us from out of *Egypt* to slay us here in this place, and thou hast done this wrong unto us; *Moses* even at that time intercedes for this people in *Numb.* 14. 2. *Moses* is so far from avenging the wrong, that he is the first man that steps in for pleading for this people at the 17, 18, 19 Verses: and therefore he beseeches God, that God would be pleased to pass by this their transgression! And there is one remarkable Instance of *Moses* his meekness and readiness to forgive wrongs and injuries done unto him, in the twelfth of *Numbers* in the beginning of the Chapter, it is said, *Moses was very meek, he was the meekest man on the face of the Earth*, he doth not reply one word. 'Tis said that *Miriam* and *Aaron* spake against him because of the *Ethiopian* woman that he had married, and said, *Hath the Lord spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken by us also?* He doth not reply one word to them; they reproached his Wife, that he had married an *Ethiopian*; and that he was a man that had taken too much upon him: but *Moses* doth not reply again, but God takes *Moses* part, and calls *Aaron* and *Miriam* to stand before him, and God smites *Miriam* with a Leprosie, because she carried it so before him; and yet look into the 13 Verse, *Moses cried unto the Lord*,

Lord, saying, Heal her now I beseech thee; Moses was the man that was wronged by *Miriam*, and *Miriam* was cast into a Leprosie, and now *Moses* is the first man that steps unto God to plead for her: Oh his great love and readiness that was in him to forgive and pass by injuries, which made him to forget his duty to God, limiting him for the time, *Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee*, let it be done *now* I beseech thee; Oh here's a pattern, here is an Example for the imitation of all!

3. *Examp.* A third Example that I shall mention, is that of *David: David* a man full of the Spirit of God, and we find him a man ready to pass by personal wrongs and injuries: Because that *Shimei* had cursed him, some of *David*'s Worthies would have smote off his head, and *David* would not suffer them, *It may be*, saith *David, God hath bidden him to go and say, Curse David:* This was a foul aspersion cast upon *David, Come out thou bloody man, come out thou bloody man*, see the 2 *Sam.* 16. 6, 7, 8. and 2 *Sam.* 19. 21, 22, 23. Whenas one of *David*'s Captains would have had him put *Shimei* to death, *No*, saies he, *I will not Revenge*, but saies, *What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zerviah?* He pardons *Shimei*, and swears unto him, That he should not be put to death for this his Conspiracy. And so in the matter of *Saul*, *David* was greatly oppressed and persecuted by *Saul*, though *Saul* seemed to be put into his hand, when he took him asleep in the Cave, and had an opportunity to avenge his cause upon his enemy, yet *David* would not do it. It is true indeed *David*'s foot had almost slipt in the matter concerning *Nabal*, when he sware he would be avenged upon *Nabal* for the affront done to him: but when *Abigail* comes and pleads with *David*, he doth accept of her counsel and bless God, *Oh blessed*

be

be the Lord that hath sent thee to withhold my hand from shedding blood, and from avenging mine own cause this day; and thus you see *David* was a man ready to forgive and to put up wrongs and injuries.

4. *Examp.* One Example more from the Old Testament, and that is of *Elisha* in 2 *Kings* 6. 12, 13, 14. The King of *Syria* took an Army to apprehend *Elisha*, now they came to the City where *Elisha* was, to take it, and there God smites them with blindness, and *Elisha* he comes and takes them and carries them into the City of *Samaria*; at the 22 Verse, when *Elisha* had brought the Army into the midst of the City of *Samaria*, and the King of *Israel* would have been smiting of them, saies he, *My Father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them?* Saies the Prophet unto the King, *Thou shalt not smite them; Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their Master.* Though they came on purpose to apprehend him, and carry him to their Master and so to take his life, yet the Prophet seeks not to avenge himself of them; but on the contrary, requites them good for the evil they intended towards him.

5. *Examp.* And so if we look into the New Testament, there is some worth the taking notice of: As *Stephen* the Martyr, they did not only wrong *Stephen* in his name, but in his estate, and in his very life, yea, they put him to death: he was so far from seeking revenge, that the last words he breathed forth with his soul, I say the last words were, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge; and when he had said it, he fell asleep.*

6. *Examp.* And so the Apostle *Paul* in the *Galatians*, take his Example, it is worthy our imitation, in *Gal.* 4. the *Galatians* had done him a great deal of wrong, they had undervalued his Ministry, and set up false

false Teachers in opposition to him, and the Apostle he was very free to forgive the wrong, so far as it was personal; declaring that he did acknowledge it not to be any wrong, 12 Verse, *Brethren, I beseech you be as I am, for I am as ye are, ye have not injured me at all*; here is a gracious spirit: I do not look upon it as any injury as it concerns me, I do freely pass it by. Nay,

7. *Examp.* We have not only the Example of man, but the Example of *Christ* himself: Oh the wrongs and injuries that were done unto Christ! What meekness! What scourgings? what buffettings? what revilings, what reproaches? insomuch as the Governor wondred, What nothing to speak for thy self? And when he was to die, and giving up the Ghost, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* And then,

8. *Examp.* That Instance of the *Prodigals Father*; The son had greatly offended him, done him great wrong, yet *the Father runs out to meet him*, and before he could speak one word of confession or acknowledgement, the Father declares a readiness of forgiveness, he seals up his love and forgiveness, *Falls upon his neck and kisses him.* Thus you have seen the Examples of holy men, and of *Christ* himself for a pattern of passing by of wrongs and injuries. But now for the grounds of the Point: Upon what ground doth Jesus Christ Commend and Command his Disciples to this work and duty of forgiveness? Why first,

1. *Reason*, The first ground is, Because he hath forgiven them much, and therefore he requires that we should forgive others, that so they that are forgiven of Christ, may testifie their love, and also their likeness unto Christ: and that is held forth in the Parable that follows the Text; the Lord there had forgiven the Servant that ought him ten thousand Talents, and therefore

fore he expected that he should have forgiven his fellow Servant a few pence. I say all that are Christs Disciples, all that are Believers, that do believe in the name of Christ, they have very much forgiven them of the Lord. There is no man but the Lord doth forgive a great deal of that temporal punishment which he might inflict upon them: now there is no Believer but the Lord doth forgive not only temporal but eternal punishment, and therefore there is an ingagement to us unto forgiveness: Alas, what are the debts and trespasses done to us, or owing unto us in comparison of what we have done, or what we owe unto the Lord? Our sins are set forth by Talents, the offences and wrongs done unto us are set forth by pence: our sins are set forth to be ten thousand Talents, and the offences that are done unto us are but a hundred pence; when the Lord doth forgive so many transgressions, so freely, fully, so sincerely, so unchangeably, the Lord doth expect that there should be a readiness in them to forgive others from a sense of that forgiveness unto them of his, that so they may testifie themselves to be the Children of their Father which is in Heaven. But the second ground is this,

2. *Reas.* Because those that we are called upon to forgive are our *Brethren: How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?* Christ Answers, *Till seventy times seven.* Now there is a great deal in the very name of *Brother* that may challenge forgiveness, and call us upon this duty; though many, though never so many, yet still often and ever called a brother; for still in one sense or other; every man is a brother: some nearer than other, though not born of the same Parents, though not of Kindred, yet he may be a *Brother* in the same faith; though not a Brother in the family, yet a Brother in the same Town, City, Country,

or

or Nation; however in the same common nature of *Adam*, in respect of the poor, dark, frail nature every man and woman is a Brother: but some relations more near than others. This spiritual relation, the same Profession, the same Faith, the same God, the same Inheritance: this is a great engagement to pass by and to forgive wrongs whilst he is a Brother. The Lord when he forgives, he forgives inferiours; there is an infinite distance between God and the creature; when the Lord forgives a poor creature, there is an infinite distance betwixt God and man, but not betwixt man and man, and therefore upon this account Christ requires it. But then,

3. *Reas.* Thirdly, Another ground is this, If there be neglect of this Duty unto any of their Brethren, it will be a grief unto their fellow-servants, and they will make their complaint unto their Lord. It cannot but be a great grief of heart unto those that are fellow-servants, when any that do profess the name of God, shall be so far from performing this Duty, that they shall express a spirit of Revenge, and a spirit of Enmity: it will sadden the hearts of many Saints, when they shall see one that is called a Brother, a Professour, when they shall see him so unready to forgive, as he shall study wrongs and injuries, and study revenge; it will grieve them, and cause them many times to go to the Lord and make their complaint, There is such a man that makes profession of thy Name, and yet walks very unworthy of that profession, very unsutable. But,

4. *Reas.* Fourthly, Again, Neglect of this Duty will hinder and keep back a great deal of good, and pull down a great deal of evil: Christ knew this very well, and therefore he did command this Duty, Christ knew that the neglect of this Duty would hinder men

men of a great deal of good: It may deprive a man of many temporal mercies, of many temporal salvations; the Lord may call in the grant of temporal mercies, whenas he shall see such a spirit in any that profess his Name, as to retain the sense of wrongs and injuries, and not to pass them by, it puts the Lord upon it many times to recall the grant of temporal mercies, as in the Parable following. Nay not only so, but it may deprive the soul of many special spiritual choice mercies: It may hinder the soul from beholding the light of Gods countenance. It is true, the soul being once pardoned by Faith in Christ, God will never recall that pardon: Ay but if that man or woman that is pardoned, and they have the pardon sealed and witnessed, yet shall walk unworthy of pardoning love, and shall not come up to this Duty of forgiving, pardoning, and passing by wrongs and injuries, the Lord will recall the manifestation of his pardoning Love, and the sense of it, though not the pardon it self. It doth not only deprive the soul of much good, but it also pulls down much evil, and not only outward evils, but sometimes the Lord manifests a great deal of wrath and displeasure upon such a one as is of an implacable spirit to retain wrongs and injuries; as it was with that servant that would not forgive his fellow-servant, the Lord commands that he should be delivered up unto the Tormentor, and cast into prison until he had paid the uttermost Farthing: Why, a man though he hath but a profession, the Lord lets him alone with that formal profession till such time as he comes forth with such a waspish peevish spirit against Gods people, and seeks to wrong and injure them; Why, then the Lord he takes the advan-

advantage upon him, and gives him up unto the Tormentor becauſe of ſuch a waſpiſh ſpirit; whenas he will not forgive a Brother a wrong or injury, but retain anger, he cannot find in his heart to forgive: the Lord ſometimes comes upon ſuch a man (though a Chriſtian) the Lord comes and takes him, and delivers him up to the Tormentor, delivers him up to his own Conſcience, though not to deliver him up out of his hand, but the Lord will deliver him up unto his own Conſcience, unto the manifeſtation of wrath, till he ſhall have made ſatisfaction, till he ſhall have cried out unto Chriſt for more ſtrength to carry it more like unto him.

5. *Reaſon*, But laſtly, Chriſt Commands and Commends the forgiving of wrongs and injuries, that ſo his Diſciples they may have room to act their Graces, and do ſome ſingular thing for the Lord; in the fifth of *Matthew*, when Chriſt put them upon this Duty, there ſaies Chriſt, *What ſingular thing do you, if you love them that love you, what great matter is that? The Publicans do the ſame, the very Heathen do the ſame:* Ye wiſh good, and do good to them that do the like to you, that is no great matter, But what ſingular thing do you? Chriſt would have all his Diſciples to do ſomething more than the World doth, and he is a Monſter amongſt men that will not do good when he can, when good is done unto him: But Chriſt he would have his Diſciples, his people, do ſome ſingular good thing for him: The Lord hath ordered it, that they ſhall meet with wrongs and injuries more than any people in the World, for the trial of their Graces. Offences muſt come, there is need of them, great neceſſity there ſhould

be

be offences in this ſenſe, that wrongs and injuries ſhould be done, that the Lord by this might try and exerciſe the Graces of his people, there would be elſe no room for the trial and exerciſe, or at leaſt not ſo much for the trial and exerciſe of love, meekneſs, patience, forbearance, long-ſuffering, forgiving, and forbearing one another. If there were not wrongs and injuries, there would be no room for the exerciſe of theſe Graces, Chriſt would have his people put upon it to do ſome ſingular thing. As many a man or woman will ſay, Well, let me alone as I am, and I am as quiet as any man living, do not diſturb me, or do not wrong me, and you ſhall live as peaceably and as quiet as any people in the World: Ay, here's good Neighbourhood, but this favours not of Grace; Chriſt would teach his people to do ſomething ſingular; the World ſaies, Ye ſhall have blow for blow, and wrong for wrong, and injury for injury, but let them alone and you ſhall be quiet; here's no more than the wild beaſts in the Wilderneſs will here do, is no trial of Grace: where is your love, your meekneſs, your patience, your long-ſuffering? The Lord would have his people in the exerciſe of Grace, to do ſomething more than the World.

Object. But you will ſay, May not a natural man do this, that hath meer nature, quiet nature, paſs by wrongs and injuries, and not render reviling for reviling, and wrong for wrong?

Anſw. I Anſwer, Yes, There is many a man will go a great way in this, that hath but good nature: But oh! what a ſhame is this to them that profeſs to have more than nature? Will not this be a ſhame and condemnation to thoſe that profeſs more than good nature, that they who have but good

nature may exceed them? And truly, that we may be ashamed of our neglect, and provoked unto our Duty, I shall give you but two or three Instances of what men have done by good nature: And oh that the Lord would fasten something upon us, either by what good men or bad men have done!

Amongst the Heathen Writers, it is written of that Sect of Philosophers that were called *Pythagoras* his Scholars, there was this Rule amongst them, That when any offence was given by one to the other, the Parties offending and offended should agree together and make up the breach before the Sun set, whatever the injury and wrong was: and now we let many a Sun set and not shake hands and close hearts.

There is another Instance amongst the Heathens, which is very remarkable, of a Governour, and an excellent Governour: Upon a time, there was one of the chief Ring-leaders that struck at this Governour, and struck out his eye, and he though but a Heathen, was so far from being revenged of him, as he takes this offender and receives him into his Family: And oh that this Heathenish man should thus forgive him that had put out his eye, and yet we cannot forgive one that gives a blemish to our Name!

There is another Instance you have in Scripture, and that is *Esau*, *Jacob*'s Brother: *Jacob* supplanted him, took him at an advantage, and got away the birth-right, and stole the blessing from him; and although his offences were very great and did stir up his passion against his brother, insomuch as *Jacob* was forced to flee from his presence; yet afterward, how freely doth *Esau* put up all the wrongs and injuries done unto him, and how friendly doth

doth he carry it towards him? Oh! how will *Esau* condemn many that profess to be the seed of *Jacob*? Shall *Esau* forgive such wrongs and injuries as to have his Birth-right and the blessing taken from him, and yet we that are the seed of *Jacob*, cannot put up the least petty wrong and injury! But I should shew you the difference betwixt the natural mans forgiveness and the spiritual mans; and several cases of Conscience, which I shall reserve for a further opportunity.

SERMON III.

MATT. 18. 21, 22.

Then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times: but until seventy times seven.

THere were two Doctrins raised from the Words, the first was this,

1. *Doct.* That the thoughts of the Lord and the waies of the Lord, in this matter of Forgiving Offences, are far above the thoughts and the waies of man, as far above ours as the Heavens are above the Earth. The second was this,

2. *Doct.* That the often Forgiving Offences is a Duty which Christ Commends unto, and Commands all his Disciples to follow. I made it clear from Scripture, both by Precept and Example of holy men of old, who have desired to walk up to this Command of the Lord. But to proceed to the Answering some Objections concerning this point. It may be Queried,

Quest.

Queſt. Firſt of all, How comes it to paſs that meer natural men may go ſo far as to out-ſtrip many Chriſtians in this particular, in the paſſing by of wrongs and injuries?

Anſw. I Anſwer, Firſt of all, There are ſome natural men walk up to their principles; though there are no natural men (in all things) walk up to their light, yet there are ſome natural men walk up to their principles; and it is true, a Chriſtian hath a more excellent principle than the natural man, which would carry him out (if well improved) far beyond all the actings of natural men; Ay, but when a Chriſtian doth not improve his principle; when he doth not walk up according to what the Lord hath given him, and the natural man doth improve his principle, and walk up unto it, the natural man, the meer natural man, may be a ſhame unto ſome Chriſtians. A man that hath a principle of reaſon, he hath a more noble principle than a principle of ſenſe, yet if the principle of reaſon lie hid, and be clouded, it is poſſible that he may then act beneath a beaſt, and a natural man that hath but a natural principle, he may excel the Chriſtian that hath the more noble principle, by walking up to his principle. But,

2. Secondly, A meer natural man, that hath but a natural principle, may out-ſtrip ſome Chriſtians in this work of forgiving wrongs and injuries, becauſe there is many a natural man places his life and righteouſneſs in this, he hath nothing elſe to commend him to God, nothing elſe to truſt to for ſalvation, nothing elſe: He is quiet, peaceable, loving, and one that will do no wrong, rather put up wrongs and injuries, than do wrongs unto any: Now, whenas a man doth truſt to any of his works for life, it is a wonder to ſee what a great deal ſuch a man will do, whenas a man works for

life; there is such a desire in such men to work for life, and to work for righteousness, and work for Heaven: It is very admirable to see what a natural man will do upon such an account; Oh what a shame is it to Christians? yet there is no true Believer but is bound to do as much for God, and as much for Christ as if he were to earn Life and Salvation by doing: Christ having laid down his life for him, he accounts himself as much ingaged to do for Christ, as if he were to gain life by doing, it is a shame to Christians to consider what a natural man will do for life and salvation. But

3. Thirdly, There is many a natural man will outstrip a Christian in this, because some natural men have the advantage of a natural disposition; there are some that are more mild, and more peaceable, and more loving and gentle: some men are so, and do exceed others in natural qualifications: now such a man hath a great advantage, whenas he is put upon such a work as of passing by wrongs and injuries. The Lord many times, and for the most part, makes choice of, and brings in to himself the worst of Natures, the most crooked, the most rugged, the most knotty pieces, the Lord is pleased to make choice of such; and this is for the glory of the great Master Builder, for the glory of his Wisdom, and the glory of his Power, and the glory of his Grace: I say this doth appear, in that he is pleased to make choice of the most crooked pieces of Timber for his Building; his Wisdom doth appear the more in making these crooked things straight, taking away the knottiness, and unevenness that is in the natures of poor creatures. But now a man that is of a mild nature, a soft disposition, he hath a great advantage, it is no hard matter for him to pass by wrongs and injuries; but now there are many of Gods people that have crooked natures, when God takes them to

work

work them for his Building: Oh they cannot come up to their Duty without much ſtriving, ſtruggling, wraſtling, praying and crying unto the Lord: That is another cauſe why ſome natural men may exceed a Chriſtian in that work of paſſing by wrongs and injuries. And then

4. Fourthly, A natural man may not meet with ſuch oppoſition from without, a natural man may not be ſo much hindred in this work when the Lord calls him thereunto: for the Devil ſuits his temptations according to the qualification and diſpoſition of the creature, where he ſees them mild, he will not put them upon ſuch rugged temptations; the Devil will let a natural man alone and will not ſeek to hinder him, no, when he is in the practice of ſuch a good as this, for the Devil knows that theſe his works are nothing, and he knows that ſuch a man when he hath done never ſo much, forgiven ſeventy times ſeven, his beſt works are nothing without Faith, if he hath no intereſt in Chriſt; yet ſuch a one, I ſay, will out-ſtrip many a Chriſtian, which ſhould be our ſhame, and a provocation unto us. But

Queſt. 2. Again, A Chriſtian may forgive, and a natural man may forgive, the one may forgive as often as the other: But what is the difference? Oh a great deal of difference betwixt a gracious heart and a meer natural man; and I pray take notice of it, for it may be for the diſcovery of the great deceitfulneſs of mans heart in this particular. There is many a man may look upon himſelf as forgiven, and he may think he forgives a great deal, and yet God and Chriſt look upon him, and ſee he hath forgiven nothing at all! Well, the difference betwixt a natural man, and a gracious heart, in the forgiving of wrongs and injuries, lies in theſe particulars.

Answ. 1. First of all, A natural man may forgive wrongs and injuries, but it is not from a principle of love unto God in Christ, it is meerly from reasons that are taken from himself; I say, the natural mans arguments are from himself, they are out of the shop of reason, and not from the apprehension of the love of God, nor from any perswasion of his Duty, or any desire that he hath to express his likeness and conformity unto God in Christ: I say, his reasons are from himself; He may reason thus, Alas, this is unworthy of a man to express wrath, to take revenge, or this will but disturb mine own peace, this will but lay me open to others, it will but discover my nakedness, and frowardness, my passion which is my nakedness: He reasons thus, Why should I meddle with one that is so much beneath me, it will be no great conquest if I do overcome him? And thus his Arguments are from himself. But now a gracious heart, when God comes and puts him upon the work of forgiveness, his arguments are taken all from God: By this I shall express my love unto God, and my obedience unto Christ; by this I shall shew my self like unto God, more conformable unto Christ who is the Image of the invisible God; upon this account, I say, a gracious man is brought off to forgive wrongs and injuries. But

Answ. 2. Again, A natural man when he forgives, it is in his own strength that he doth it: when he sets upon this Duty, it is in his own strength; he is never sensible of the contrary workings of his own heart, which do lie in the way to hinder him; he is not sensible of his own contrary motions that are in his own spirit against this Duty, he is not sensible of the need he stands of the Lord Jesus Christ to help him herein: and therefore he doth not make use of Christ, he doth not run unto the Lord and cry to him for strength, and rest

reſt upon him for ſtrength to perform his duty: but now a gracious heart doth not move upon his own hinges, but is made ſenſible of the contrary motions and workings of his own heart and ſpirit unto this duty, he ſees how hard his ſpirit and heart is brought off to this duty, he ſees what need he hath of a better principle, and of further ſtrength than that he hath in himſelf, and therefore he runs to Chriſt, and cries unto him, Oh Lord, ſaies he, here is an opportunity for me to expreſs my love to thee in the forgiving ſuch and ſuch wrongs and injuries, here is an opportunity for me to do ſome ſingular good thing for thee: but I have no ſtrength of my own, and therefore he cries unto the Lord, and waits upon the Lord for ſtrength; but as for the natural man, he is as the Ship upon the Sands, and beats and ſtaves himſelf there. But

Anſw. 3. Again, A natural man when he forgives wrongs and injuries, he aims at himſelf; as ſelf is the beginning, ſo ſelf is the end; he forgives indeed, but it is not for Chriſts ſake, but for his own ſake, and oh it is a great deal that a man will do for himſelf, for his own credit, for his own reputation, that he may be taken for a good man, for a loving man, for a peaceable man, that he may not diſcover his nakedneſs: for his own credit and name a man will do a great deal, and ſo for his own eaſe, and for his own peace, that he may not be diſturbed in his own ſpirit, and he ſaies, to render evil for evil will be an occaſion of diſturbance to his own ſpirit, if he retains wrongs and injuries it will prejudice his health, and bring down his ſtrength; and ſo for ſuch ends a meer natural man may be brought to forgive: But now a gracious heart when he forgives, he eyes the Lord, and does forgive for the Lords ſake: he eyes the honour of God, and the glory of God, that ſo he may do ſomething for the lifting up of the

name

name of God, that truth may be well spoken of, that God and his waies and Christ may be well spoken of, that he may be lifted up in the world:

Answ. 4. Again, A natural man when he hath forgiven wrongs and injuries, commonly he presently reflects upon himself, and is lifted up because of what he hath done, and this tends to the nourishing of pride in his heart, and ruine of himself; as *Jehu* said in another case, *Come and see my zeal for the Lord:* And so in this case of a natural man, when he hath forgiven wrongs, Come and see my meekness, come and see my patience, come and see my long-suffering, there is no man would have passed by such a wrong as I have done, and taken no revenge: you shall have it oft repeated by himself, and that's an aggravation after he hath done it, because he makes it his work to lift up himself: But now a gracious heart acts contrary to this, he reflects upon the Lord when he hath been inabled to forgive any wrong or injury, he desires to give God the glory, he is sensible that if the Lord had left him, he had done as evilly as others: at such a time my heart was boiling, and rolling up and down and meditating revenge, and the Lord was pleased to bring off my heart to this duty of forgiving wrongs, and then gives glory unto the Lord; and thus did *David*, in 1 *Sam.* 25. whenas the Lord had sent *Abigail*, and took off *David* from his purpose of revenging himself upon *Nabal*, at the 32, 33 Verses; Oh how doth *David* give all the glory to God! and so he doth not take any thing to himself, but acknowledge that the free Grace of God was in it, and it was the hand of God that did keep him, his heart was as prone as any other; *Oh blessed be God, and blessed be the instrument that God sent to prevent me from revenging of my self.*

Answ. 5.

Answ. 5. Another difference is, That a natural man many times may forgive, but it is through length of time that he wears out the Impression of the wrong and injury that is done unto him: But now a gracious heart doth not let nature alone to wear it out by length of time, but it is desirous to set grace at work for the present silencing of that corruption which is boiling and stirring in the heart; you know *Esau*'s heart was filled with a great deal of revenge against *Jacob*, yet when *Jacob* fled and kept out of his presence twenty years and more, at last *Esau* begins to fall from that passion of anger, and when he comes to his brother he falls upon his neck and kisses him: There is many a natural man, may through continuance and length of time forget: But a gracious heart (though corruption may be boiling up) yet Grace will take hold of its heel, and will presently be fetching in arguments, such arguments as have been spoken of before, fetch'd from God, from Christ, from the love of God, from the command of God, from conformity unto Christ, and by these arguments laid before the soul, it is desirous to come up unto its duty.

Answ. 6. Again, There is this difference, A natural man may forgive; Ay, but it is a hard thing for him to render good for evil, and to overcome evil with good: It is possible he may not revenge the wrong that is done unto him; Ay, but it is a hard matter to overcome evil with good. Now a gracious heart looks to the Commandment of Christ, of overcoming evil with good, and looks to the example of Christ, who overcame evil with good; and to the examples of the Saints, *Joseph* did good for evil, and *Moses* did good for evil, and *Elisha* did good for evil, and *David* did good for evil; and he desires herein to be a Follower of Christ, and to come up to his duty: Now, I say,

it

it is a very hard thing for a natural man to come up to this duty; though he may forgive and pass by wrongs and injuries, yet to requite evil with good, and to love them that hate him, and to pray for them that persecute him and despitefully use him, this is a hard lesson for a natural man. But then

Quest. 3. A third Question is, Whether is a man bound to forgive wrongs and injuries, whenas a man doth not confess, when they are not confessed and acknowledged? The place that some make use of to uphold their corruption, is *Luk.* 17. 4. *And if he trespass seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him.* Therefore some think from hence, that they are not bound to forgive a man the wrong and injury that is done unto him, when that they be not confessed. But to this

Answ. I Answer, That a Christian ought to forgive wrongs and injuries, though not confest. The ground of my assertion is this, Because we are bound to forgive as God forgives, and the Lord brings forth a pardon before one word of acknowledgement can be made: As in that Instance, Before the son spake one word of confession, the Father gave him a pardon, and sealed up his pardon unto him, and fell upon his neck and kisses him, and then he makes confession. Our rule and practice must be from God himself, that we are bound to pardon and forgive, though there be not an acknowledgement and confession of the wrong.

Object. But you will say, How can I forgive him the wrong, that will not come at me, and hearken unto me?

Answ. Thou maist forgive in thine own spirit, there ought to be a readiness in thy heart to forgive; as the Lord was ready to forgive, so thy heart should be

be prepared, and ready at alltimes for forgiving and passing by wrongs and injuries. Nay, it is not only required that thou shouldst be in a readiness to forgive: but the Lord requires that thou shouldst pass by wrongs and injuries, so far as not to meditate upon them, and so far as not to be hindred in holding forth love unto thy brother. And to say further in answer to this Objection, Whereas thou saist, thou can'st not; Why? Because he will not come to thee. I answer, Thou art bound to go to him, if he will not come to thee: thou art bound to go to that man, or that woman that hath done thee wrong, if they will not come to thee; in *Matth.* 18. 15. *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go to him, and tell him first privately betwixt thee and him, and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained a Brother.*

Object. This is strange you will say, He hath done me the wrong, it is he that hath heaped injuries upon me, and what, should I seek him first?

Answ. Yes, If he will not seek thee, then thou must seek him: It is true, it's his duty to come to thee, but if he will not come unto thee, then Christ hath imposed the duty upon thee to go unto him, and this is the pattern of God himself. Poor creatures, we had offended the Divine Majesty, and we are far from coming to God, nay the louder God calls, the further are we from God, he pursues after them, they will not come to him, now he will come to them, by his Word and by his Spirit, and bring his pardon, and make them sensible of their fault and transgression; so that what the Lord doth unto the sons of men in this particular, it is for our imitation.

Quest. Again, There is another Query, or case of Conscience, Whether may not a man, in case of wrongs and injuries, endeavour to right his wrongs; as, Whether

ther may he not use lawful means to right himself? Whether may he not go to use the Magistrate, or to the Church?

Answ. A man may upon these cautions,

1. First to deal with him in a private way, and so to labour to convince him of his fault, so far as it is a sin against God; now if a man cannot prevail in a private way, then he may proceed further, he may take two or three witnesses, and seek unto the Church. But

2. Secondly, Take this caution, That before a man doth this, he must be sure to forgive it in his own heart as to himself, to pass by the wrong and injury as to him, and to retain no grudge in his heart as to himself. And then further,

3. Thirdly, Take this caution, In such a case a man may not make himself the last end, and the great end for which he doth these things, for he is bound to seek the glory of God in the first place, and to do this, that God may have honour; and in the next place, he is to eye the good of his brother, that his brother may be reclaimed, that his brother may be convinced, that his Brother may see the sin that he hath committed against God: a man ought to seek opportunity to right himself, but not for himself, but he ought to eye the glory of God and the good of his brother, and then he may use such lawful means as God lays before him.

Quest. There is another Query, as a Case of Conscience, Whether may not a man that is wronged by another, go and spread his wrong before God, and complain unto God of the wrong and injury that is done unto him by another?

Answ. I answer unto this, That a man may go unto the Lord and make his complaint whenas others have done him wrong, but take heed it be not for this end, that thou mayst be avenged of thy brother; if there be

any

any desire of revenge, nay, if there be any desire that the Lord should revenge, this is not that forgiveness that the Lord calls his people unto.

Object. But you will say then, Why, upon what account may we spread our wrongs and injuries before the Lord? If we may not desire that God would revenge them, and requite them according to what they have done unto us, to what end should we make our complaints before the Lord?

Answ. I Answer, We may complain for this end, That the Lord might consider us, that the Lord may pity us, that the Lord may deliver us, from the wrongs, and from the pressures and grievances which are happened to us, but there ought not to be a desire of revenge; see *Prov.* 20. 22. *Say not thou, I will recompence evil; but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee:* What then, may I not go unto the Lord? Yes, for this end that the Lord may save thee, but not that the Lord may take vengeance for thee upon another: he doth not say, Go and wait upon the Lord that he may take vengeance; no, but wait upon the Lord and he shall save thee, he shall clear up thy good name, and make thine innocency to appear. But there ought not to be a waiting upon the Lord that he may take vengeance for thee; this is far from that forgiveness which Christ calls for in the Text.

Nay further, The Lord would have his people to be so far from desiring revenge, that he would have them to pray that the Lord would forgive others the wrong which they have done unto them: mark those Examples of Christ and *Stephen*, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*; and saith *Stephen* in the like case, *Lord lay not this sin unto their charge*; so that I say the Lord would have his people so far from spreading the wrongs and injuries that others have done unto them, that

that he would rather have them with Christ to pray, *Father forgive them*; and with *Stephen*, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge*; and to *pray for them that persecute you, and that speak all manner of evil of you:* The Lord would have his people so far from spreading their wrongs before him upon this account, that the Lord would avenge them. The deceit of mans heart is such that man will forgive, that the Lord may reward it, and revenge it; no, this is not the forgiveness; but that forgiveness which Christ here calls for, ought to be a thorow forgiveness, to forgive so far as to pray for them, that the Lord would forgive their sin unto them; that the Lord would not lay their sin unto their charge.

SER.

SERMON IV.

MATT. 18. 21, 22.

Then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?
Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times: but until seventy times seven.

YOu may remember the Doctrin which we are insisting upon is, *That the often forgiving of offences and injuries is a duty which Christ commends unto, and commands all his Disciples to follow.* Not till seven times, but until seventy times seven. I proved the Doctrin by Scripture, and held forth unto you the examples of godly men, who had much of the Spirit of the Lord; and the more of Gods Spirit was in them, the more ready were they to pass by wrongs and injuries which were done unto them by their Brethren. I gave you the grounds of the Point, the last day I came to answer some Objections, and Cases of Conscience. But I come now to the Application and Uses of the Point.

1. *Use.* It is a word of reproof in the first place. Oh what a sad complaint may we take up, that this duty which Jesus Christ commands, is so little practised in our Generation! that there is such an unreadiness in the spirits of most men, if not in all men, to come up to this duty, a Gospel duty, a hard duty; and oh what unreadiness is there in mens spirits to come up unto the practice of it! Oh! how many are there in the World that do not only come short of walking up unto this Rule, but do walk quite contrary unto it? And I shall shew you who they are: and oh that God would speak convincingly unto mens hearts.

1. First, They walk contrary unto this Rule of Christ, *Who are easily provoked unto wrath*, who are soon displeased, who are soon put out of the way, take up every small wrong, every petty offence, nay, are many times provoked unto wrath upon a conceited injury, for a poor trivial business, that will make a man an offender for a word: Nay, it may be, displeased for want of a look, or for want of a Complement: Oh how contrary is this unto the Rule of Christ? Oh! how far are such spirits from that forbearance, and that long-suffering that the Gospel calls unto? Where is the grace of long-suffering? Nay, such spirits, they are far from the exercise of the grace of Love, Love believeth all things, and hopeth all things, makes the best interpretation of all things: Such spirits as are easily provoked with every petty wrong and offence, they are far from the duty of the exercise of this grace of Long-suffering, and come far short of walking up to this Rule that Jesus Christ hath left for his Disciples to walk in. But,

2. Secondly, They walk contrary unto this Rule of Christ, *Who are retentive of those wrongs and injuries, that are hardly appeased when once provoked*, that will re-

remember one wrong seven daies, nay, seventy times seven: when Christ saies, Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, let it not once go down upon your wrath, there are many that let the Sun set seven times, nay, seventy times seven on their wrath. Let me say to such, I must needs say that such actings are beneath the actings of a man; there is a heavy Judgement upon such a man, or such a woman, a heavy Judgement is upon them, and they know not of it; I say such as can retain wrongs or injuries, think of them seventy times seven daies, speak of them seventy times seven, a Judgement will belong unto them, such a Judgement as was upon *Nebuchadnezar*, *Dan.*4 32. Truly I may say of such men and women, this Judgement is upon them in a spiritual sense: He was turned out from among men to dwell with the Beasts, his reason was taken from him, and he was cast out seven times, yea seven years among the beasts. I say it of such men and women that have this spirit reigning upon them, whenas anger lodgeth in their hearts, they are turned out as among the beasts; what a Judgement is it to be turned out among the Beasts daies and years together? and so is every one judged of God, till they shall come to know that the most high ruleth over all, and that he hath taught them this lesson, To forget, and to forgive. But let me say again of such, Whilst passion so reigns, they give entertainment unto Satan that foul and unclean spirit: when ever anger and wrath lodgeth in any mans heart, the Devil lodgeth there too; see it in *Ephes* 4.26,27. *Be angry and sin not; let not the Sun go down in your wrath, neither give place to the Devil.* That man that lets anger lodge in his bosom all night, gives entertainment that night to the Devil. There is many a man, and many a woman in the world in word will bid defiance

to the Devil or Satan, and yet they open their bosom, their breast, and their doors, and give entertainment unto Satan; for where anger and wrath lodgeth in any mans bosom, the Devil will certainly creep in, they cannot be parted; these two will go together: If there be anger one night, that night the Devil will be there too; And oh! that we may not be found to give entertainment unto such a Guest as Satan is: But they do give entertainment unto him, that are retentive of wrongs and injuries.* But,

3. Thirdly, How contrary do they walk unto the Rule of Christ, *That do aggravate all offences which are done unto them*: aggravate all wrongs and all injuries, and do improve them to the uttermost, and make the worst of them? So did *Laban* whenas he pursued after *Jacob* when he returned to his own Country, *Gen.* 31. *Laban* pursues after him, 26, 27, 30 Verses, *What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as Captives taken with the Sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and didst not tell me?* &c. *Yea thou hast stolen away my Gods.* See here's a man that aggravates all to the utmost; twice, thrice, *Thou hast stolen away, and stolen away, and carried away my Daughters as Captives, and thou hast stolen away my Gods:* Oh, such a Spirit is far unlike unto the Spirit of God. The Lord Jesus calls offences against men, *Trespasses*, and so Christ would have us to look upon them as Trespasses, as errors, and not to aggravate them, nor to look upon them as sins of presumption; Oh! that such hearts were but as ready to aggravate their own offences against God! We aggravate all wrongs and all injuries which are done against us, but we are but little in aggravating our sins and our transgressions against the Lord; Oh that men

could

could but aggravate both their own sins and the Lords mercies, as they are ready to aggravate the offences of their Brother. We commit many sins against the Lord, and do not aggravate them, we receive many mercies from the Lord, and do not aggravate them: we do not compass our mercies, and tell the Towers of them, and behold the goodness of the Lord in them; and yet oh how ready are we to aggravate our wrongs, and compass them round again and again, and aggravate them to the uttermost? Oh! how far do such come short of walking up to the rule of Christ? And let it be considered, what should become of poor creatures. If the Lord should aggravate thy offences as thou dost thy Brothers, and set them before thee with all the aggravations of them, how sad would it be unto thee? Oh! that we might not improve and aggravate all to the height, for that spirit is very unlike unto Jesus Christ. Again,

4. Fourthly, They are far from this rule *That are hardly brought off unto reconciliation*; that although there be confession, and although there be acknowledgement sometimes, though they that have offended be ready to acknowledge the offence, and do seek reconciliation; nay, although friends intercede, and friends plead that they would be reconciled; nay, although God steps in, and Christ pleads, and Christ beseeches, and Christ commands, and God sets a mans Conscience upon him, and that speaks unto him, and lets him know he is out of the way, yet how hard is it for a man to bring off his heart into a reconciliation with his Brother, after some wrongs and injuries which are done unto him; and oh, how unlike is this to God, and how contrary is this unto the rule which Christ here commends unto, and commands his Disciples to follow? But,

5. Fifthly, Again, They are far from this Lesson, that instead of being reconciled or satisfied, *Will not be pacified, till they do avenge the wrong which is done unto them with their own hand*; they will render one evil word for another, reviling for reviling, and one evil turn for another, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: Nay, are there not some men, that are not ashamed to profess this before all the World, that they will put up no wrongs, no injuries, but they will give as good as they bring, and if you provoke me I can be as hot as you: is not this the language of the World? Oh Sirs! this is cursed speaking, and cursed acting, altogether contrary to Christs rule, for a man to avenge with his own tongue, and his own hand; Oh cursed be the wrath of *Simeon* and *Levi*, whenas they would avenge (that wrong that was done unto their Sister) with their own hands. Nay, let such men and women consider that they do but profess before all the World their likeness unto the Devil, while they do speak and while they do act; I can be as hot as you, and I can give as good as you can bring; what is that but in plain *English* to say, I can be as like the Devil as you? How far is this from a gracious heart, I can put up as many wrongs as you, and can commit my Cause unto the Lord? This makes you like to God, and the other like to the Devil himself. Nay, let such men and women consider, He that gets the best of it in such contests when mens wrath is stirred up, why truly alwaies he that gets the best of it, hath the worst of it; that man that got the victory, he is overcome: It may be he gains his lust, he may gain his will and satisfie his lust, but he may lose his peace, he may not satisfie his own heart, nor his conscience; but alwaies he that hath the best of it, goes with the worst of it. Now such as will pass by wrongs and injuries, till they

do

do requite them word for word, and wrong for wrong, they do walk contrary unto this rule which Jesus Christ hath given unto his Disciples. Again,

6. Sixthly and lastly, They come short of Christs rule, *That cannot come up to Christs number.* We are willing to forgive one or two wrongs it may be, but oh, how hard it is to come up to Christs number, to forgive seventy times seven, four hundred fourscore and ten wrongs unto one man! Oh where is the heart that can come up to this number of Christs? Nay, there is such an averseness unto the practice of this duty which Christ doth command, as it is a very hard matter for Christs people to believe it is their duty; see what the Disciple said when Christ had told him his duty, in *Luk.* 17. 4, 5. *And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again unto thee, saying, I repent: thou shalt forgive him.* And the Apostles said unto the Lord, *Increase our Faith.* When he said, *Forgive seven times in a day*, it's a hard matter to bethink it a duty, now Lord increase our Faith; Now, if it be so hard to believe it a duty, oh how hard is it to come up to the practice of it? Surely, if the best men in the World had been put upon it, to have given Answer to *Peter's* Question, they would never have answered as Jesus Christ hath answered; there is never a man upon earth would have said, Thou must forgive seventy times seven: But the thoughts of the Lord, and the waies of the Lord, are infinitely above our thoughts and our waies: it is a hard matter for us to forgive seven times, and if hard to forgive seven times, then how hard to forgive seventy times seven? Oh, that the Lord would make us sensible of our great coming short of this duty, and that the Lord would humble us, lay us low, that we have come so far short of this rule which our

Lord Jesus hath left us and all his Disciples to follow and practise in passing by wrongs and injuries.

2. *Use.* But the next Use is an Use of Exhortation. First, I shall speak to those that have done wrong unto their brother. And

Secondly, To them that have received wrongs from their brother.

1. First, To them that have done wrong unto others, that have injured their brother, or brethren, either by word or action, done them wrong in their Name or Estate, or any other way; Know that it lies upon you, and is your duty to go and seek reconciliation: It lies upon you that have done wrong, to go and tender satisfaction for the wrong which you have done unto your brother, at least to make acknowledgement of the wrong and injury which you have done: And to press you unto this duty which is hard,

1. First, Consider you that have done wrong to others, It may be thou hast put the spirit of thy brother or Neighbour out of frame, and thou hast unfitted him for all duty, either unto God or man; thou by thy injury hast stirred up his passion, and his passion hath opened a door unto the Devil, and the poor soul is exposed unto manifold temptations and snares: and oh! how is he filled with hard thoughts, with hard thoughts it may be not only of thee but of the way of God, and of the truth of God, filled with hard thoughts against Christ himself? And although it will be very sad, and a woe unto that man that shall be so offended; woe to him that shall be offended at Christ for the miscarriages of men; woe to him that shall be offended at the truth, or any of the waies of truth from the miscarriages of men: but yet know thou that hast done the wrong, and art the occasion of this, thou art under a woe; and *Woe*

also

also unto him, saith Christ, *by whom the offence cometh.* And therefore know, that it lies upon thee as thy duty to go and seek to deliver thy brother out of the snare, thy going and tendering satisfaction unto him may break the snare of the Devil for him: thou maist prevent a multitude of sins, and therefore oh that God would perswade such to come up to their duty. In a word, either he that thou hast offended or wronged, carries it impatiently, or bears it patiently a while: now if he bears it impatiently, and his spirit be put out of frame, and he begin to fret and fume in his spirit, and be thereby indisposed unto his duty, then by thy going thou maist break the snare of the Devil for him; but if he carry it patiently, and his spirit be silent before the Lord under those wrongs and those injuries which thou hast done him, thou hast the more need then to go and make acknowledgement of the wrongs thou hast done, for certainly God himself will step in on his part that is wronged, that bears the wrong patiently, and is quiet in his spirit before the Lord, the Lord will engage against thee, though he be silent, yet the wrong which thou hast done to others, unto such a man, or such a woman, it will cry very loud before the Lord; and woe be unto thee if God shall step in and ingage against thee; if God be for a man, who can be against him? if God be for him, better to have all the world engaged against him, than God to engage against him; therefore go and acknowledge thy error before thy brother: for if not, the Lord will engage against thee.

2. Secondly, And then again, Consider the patterns and examples of holy men in Scripture that have given satisfaction, and acknowledged their error to the full when they have done wrong: as *Jacob*, he had done indeed a great deal of wrong, sinned against God,

as well as againſt his Brother, in getting, or cheating his brother of the bleſſing: well, the good man returneth again to his brother, and oh how ſubmiſſive is he unto his brother? He ſends many a Preſent before him to appeaſe his wrath, and how many ſoft words does he give him, in *Gen.* 33. 5, 8. *This is to find favour in the ſight of my Lord; and theſe are the Children which the Lord hath graciouſly given thy ſervant*; and how many ſoft words doth he give unto his brother *Eſau?* By which the wrath of *Eſau* was appeaſed. And ſo you ſee *Joſeph*'s brethren, when they ſinned againſt their brother *Joſeph*, oh how free were they to make an acknowledgement of their wrong which they had done him, in *Gen.* 50. 17, 18, 19, 20. they came and made an humble acknowledgement of all the wrongs they had done unto him: *Forgive, I pray, the treſpaſs of thy Brethren, and their ſin*, &c. And at the 18 Verſe it's ſaid his Brethren wept, and fell down before his face, and ſaid, *Behold we be thy Servants*; and thus they make ſupplication that he would forgive the wrong. And ſo did *Job*'s friends, they had done him great wrongs, they had judged of his eternal eſtate, they concluded he was a hypocrite, they told him ſo to his face, they added grief to his ſorrow, great was his affliction, they had done him a great deal of wrong: Well, but in concluſion, when God doth convince them of it, they make acknowledgement of their evil unto *Job*, as in *Job* 42. 8. So then you ſee it lies upon you that have done wrong unto your Brother, to go and make acknowledgement of the wrong that you have done.

3. Thirdly, And let me ſay this further to you, to ſtir you up to this your duty, That all the Works which you perform in the ſervice of the Lord, they are loſt till ſuch time as you ſubmit unto this duty, to go

and

and seek reconciliation; see *Matth.* 5. 23, 24. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* Mark, wouldst thou bring thy gift, leave thy gift before the Altar, the Lord will not accept it, till thou beest reconciled to whom thou hast done the wrong; leave thy injury there, I will have none of it till thou hast done so: The Lord doth not say, go and carry away thy gift, but leave it there. There is many a man is taken off from his duty to God, because he cannot bring off his heart to this duty to man, and instead of leaving his gift, he carries away his gift. Go and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come again: the Lord would have you do it, and have it done instantly, go and do it speedily, do it quickly before the time of offering be past; the Lord will not receive gifts and offerings from that hand, or from that tongue that hath done wrong unto his brother, until such time as there be an acknowledgement, till such time as there be a reconciliation. So much for that duty which concerns those that have done wrong unto others, you see what necessity doth lie upon them, that they should go and acknowledge the wrong and seek reconciliation.

But a second Exhortation is to them that are wronged, and have received injury from others. The Lord by this Doctrin calls upon you to express your readiness to forgive and pass by wrongs and injuries: he would have you to forgive, and to forgive often; for Christs sake be you willing to pass by all wrongs and injuries which are done unto you. And I pray consider, That you have an opportunity here to express your Love unto Christ: I say, you that are Christs people, when

ever

ever any wrong or injury is done unto you by Neighbour or Brother, Oh! then remember you have an opportunity of expressing your love to Christ, of shewing your obedience unto the Lord Jesus Christ in a Gospel truth, you have an opportunity of doing some singular thing for Christ, and therefore take heed you do not lose the opportunity.

But you will say, Here will be some Objections (for a great deal will be objected by corrupt nature) but I shall endeavour to take them off all.

Object. 1. But you will say, He hath done me the wrong, it is a hard matter for me to go to him, or to forgive the wrong or injury which he hath done to me, Flesh and blood will not submit unto it.

Answ. 1. To which I say, Though flesh and blood will not submit unto it, yet Christs Disciples must submit unto it; if thou beest one that dost profess nothing but flesh and blood, I shall need to press this no further to you, for you will never come up unto it: but if thou beest one that dost profess submission to Christ, *Then are ye my friends*, saies Christ, *and my Disciples, if you do whatever I command you:* Then, when you yield obedience unto the command of my Gospel.

Answ. 2. And let me say further, If he hath done thee wrong, and thou seekest him first, thy acting it shall be most like unto God, for so God acts towards the sons of men: the sons of men had wronged God, God stoops first, he seeks reconciliation first, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead to be reconciled unto him:* though he be the wronged, yet he acts first.

Answ. 3. And let me tell thee further, That the more thou stoopest to him that hath wronged thee, the more peace will redound to thine own spirit another day; it is a hard duty when thou lookest upon it at a distance,

ſtance, but when the Lord helps thee to come up to it, thou ſhalt have moſt peace in it: and when ever it be over, it will never repent thee that thou didſt ſeek that man that hath done thee the wrong.

Object. 2. Ay, But it will be Objected further: He hath done me that wrong that cannot be repaired, he hath wronged me in my good name; oh his words have been as ſharp Arrows, and they have wounded ſecretly: If he had broken my head, I could have born it, that would have been healed again, but he hath wounded my good name, taken away my good name, and therefore herein it is hard for a man to come up to this duty of forgiving of ſuch wrongs.

Anſw. 1. But to this I Anſwer, Thou ſpeakeſt of Arrows that ſhall wound thee in thy name: Oh but they are not worſe than thoſe which wounded Chriſt: they wounded him in his name, in his good name, they reproached him, and reviled him, yet he cried out, *Father forgive them:* they are not ſharper than thoſe Arrows that *David* met with all over, when his good name was wounded; when *Shimei* curſed him, he calls him a bloody man; Come out thou bloody man, here is a ſharp Arrow: Ay, but *David* paſſeth by that wrong and injury in obedience to God.

Anſw. 2. And I deſire thee in the ſecond place, to Conſider that thoſe Arrows are not ſhot without Gods hand, the Lord hath a hand in it, and therefore eye the hand of God: If Gods hand had not been in it, he could not have opened his mouth againſt him. *David* conſidered that when *Shimei* curſed him, ſaies he, *It may be God hath ſaid unto him, Go and curſe David*; and ſo his ſpirit ſubmits unto it: Ay, *David* conſidered, it is a righteous thing with God, for I have ſinned againſt, I have wounded the name of that Lord by my tranſgreſſions: And therefore it is a righteous

thing

thing with the Lord that my name ſhould be wounded with theſe Arrows.

Anſw. 3. And let me ſay further, That as God hath a hand in it, ſo the Lord might have ſhot worſe Arrows againſt thee; the Lord might have ſhot the arrows of his diſpleaſure againſt thee: the Lord hath ſhot with mans arrows upon thy name; but what if the Lord doth ſhoot off his arrows upon thy ſpirit, a wounded ſpirit who can bear? And know if thy ſpirit be not brought off to paſs by thoſe wrongs and injuries which are done unto thy brother, the Lord may wound thy ſpirit, even as he ſuffers men to wound thy good name.

Object. 3. But thirdly, It will be objected further, (for it is a very hard thing to come up to this duty, and there are many cavils) and ſome will ſay, The wrong which he hath done me, it is known unto others: If it were private I could paſs it by: But what will others think of me if I paſs it by? they will ſay I am guilty, and I ſhould be counted a Child, or a Fool to paſs by ſo many wrongs, and ſuch open wrongs and injuries.

Anſw. 1. I Anſwer, Thou ſaieſt thou ſhalt be counted a Child, when Chriſt ſaith thou muſt be counted a Child, *Matth.* 18. 3. If ever you will get to Heaven, you muſt be converted and become as little Children; do not ſtand upon that, that you muſt be as a Child; no, thou muſt become a Child in theſe things, or no entrance into Heaven: as the Apoſtle ſaid in 1 *Cor.* 14. 20. *Brethren, be not Children in underſtanding: howbeit, in malice be Children:* Be not Children in underſtanding unto God, but unto men in malice be Children; the Lord would have his people be as far from ſeeking revenge, as a young Child: In malice be as Children.

Anſw.

Answ. 2. And whereas thou saiest, Thou shalt be accounted a fool, to put up every wrong and injury, men will account thee a fool for thy labour; I tell thee, thou shalt be accounted a fool by none but those that are so themselves: for the Lord doth account it a point of Wisdom, high Wisdom; see what the *Proverbs* of *Solomon* say, *Prov.* 14. 29. *He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding, but he that is hasty in spirit exalteth folly.* See now who is a fool, he that puts up wrong, or he that is hasty in spirit to avenge himself. The Word of the Lord saies, He that is hasty in spirit, he is the fool; he that will prevent anger, he that is slow to wrath, he is of great understanding whatever men account of him: in *Prov.* 19. 11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression*; whereas thou saist it will be thy disgrace, the Lord saies it shall be a mans glory to pass by wrongs and injuries. Many a man whilst he seeks to shun the name of a fool, he becomes a fool by giving way to wrath, and being drawn on to wrath and revenge he becomes a fool; think of it, is it not better to be accounted a fool than to become a fool, when anger lodgeth in the bosom of fools?

Object. 4. Ay, but it is further Objected, Some will say I never did him wrong in my life, he hath abused me so and so, and I never did him the least wrong in all my daies: here is a hard task. Well, in Answer to this,

Answ. 1. First of all, The Lord may say the same of thee, if thou beest one that the Lord hath forgiven: the Lord may say, Oh, I have done such a man good so and so, and he hath rebelled and sinned so against me; I say, may not the Lord urge this against every one of us? I have done this and that for him, and I have never done him wrong, yet he hath done

thus

thus to me: notwithstanding which, the Lord forgives those transgressions. And let me say,

Answ. 2. Further, That this will be more praiseworthy, and more acceptable unto God; in 1 *Pet.* 3. 17. *It is better if the will of God be so, that you suffer for well doing, than for evil doing:* If you suffer as evil doers, you will have little comfort in it; but if suffering in well doing, take it patiently, and the more patiently you take it, the more acceptable it will be unto the Lord.

Object. Ay, but I have been a friend unto him (thus will men stand to plead for their passions, a hard matter it is to forgive) I have been a friend unto this man, I have done him good all my daies, and yet he hath wronged me so and so nevertheless; To which I say,

Answ. 1. Thou hast the more cause to pity him, if he be one that doth return evil unto thee for thy good, thou hast the better end of the staff; see what *Solomon* saies in *Prov.* 17. 13. *Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house:* Mark, here's a sad threatening; if thou remembrest this, thou hast cause to pity thy brother that hath done wrong unto thee, the Lord hath said it, and thou hast cause to pity him; *Evil shall not depart from his house.*

Again, The Lord may Object against thee, the Lord may say, I have been a friend to thee and done thee good all thy daies, and thou yet sinnest against me; and if this be not any bar unto the Lord to shew forgiveness unto thee, let not it be a bar to shew thy forgiveness unto thy brother.

Object. Ay, but he hath done me much wrong, spoken evil of me in every company he comes in: he hath wronged me after reconciliation and peacemaking, he hath done me much wrong: this is a hard task.

Answ.

Answ. But let me say unto thee, notwithstanding all this thou comest short of the rule of Christ: thou hast forgiven often, thou saist, hast thou forgiven one Brother seven times? why truly there are many that cannot say they have exceeded that: But if thou hast forgiven seven times, that is no great matter, thou thinkest it much, but Christ thinks it little: Alas! what is seven times to seventy times seven, four hundred threescore and two times? Which when done thou are but come up to the Letter of the Word! Thou hast wronged the Lord in his Name, thou hast sinned against God again and again, thou hast wronged him in his Name and in his Glory many thousand times, and yet that is no obstacle of the Lords mercy towards thee, notwithstanding thine often renewed provocations. Oh let not the often renewed provocations of thy brother hinder thee from thy forgiving him.

SERMON I.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

YOu have an Hiſtory in this Chapter of the ten firſt Patriarchs, from *Adam* unto *Noah:* In every Age God had ſome to bear up his Name in the World; and amongſt thoſe, theſe ten Fathers were choice Pillars: But here is ſomething remarkably ſpoken of *Enoch*, here was accounted more of him than all the reſt: *Enoch walked with God, and he was not.* He ſaith of all the reſt, they lived ſo long, ſo many years, and then they died, but *Enoch walked with God, and he was not*; therefore we ſhould conſider who this *Enoch* was: the New Teſtament bears witneſs of him, and ſpeaks of this *Enoch* as one that was a choice piece in his Generation; the Apoſtle *Jude* tells you that he was a Prophet, as you may read in that Epiſtle, the 14 Verſe, *Enoch alſo the ſeventh from Adam, propheſieth of thee, ſaying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints to execute Judgement upon all,* &c. *Enoch* the ſeventh from *Adam*, ſo *Jude* deſcribes him. Some

put

put a great deal in this mysterie; *The seventh from Adam*; and I think there was something in it as he was a Type of Christ: he was a Type of that *Christ* that was to be the *Rest* of his people, that was to give *perpetual Rest*, everlasting rest unto his Sains: his name *Enoch* signifies one that was dedicated or separated unto the Lord; and so he was a Type of Christ that was chosen out among his Brethren, and he was separated and dedicated unto the Lord, *He walked with God*; and so did Christ, and therein he was a Type of him: he was well pleasing unto God, *He had this Testimony*, saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *he pleased God*, Heb. 11. 5. *Christ* was the object of the Fathers good pleasure in a special manner, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* But I rather think the Apostle intended no more than *Enoch*: but only to distinguish him from another *Enoch* that was in that Generation, as you may read of him in *Gen.* 4. 17. And *Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Enoch; and he builded a City, and called the City after the Name of his son Enoch:* So this *Enoch*, in *Gen.* 5. was a third from *Adam*, for he was not the son of *Cain*, but the son of *Jared*, and of *Adam*'s posterity by *Seth* and *Rubin Cain*; he came of that seed that was given instead of *Abel*; when *Abel* was slain, God gave another seed instead of *Abel*, and *Enoch* came of that seed.

The Church of Christ shall lose nothing by persecution: if *Abel* be taken away by bloody hands, the Lord will raise up another seed; and *Enoch* a choice man is of that seed to hold up the name of God in the World. When *John* Baptist was put in Prison, Christ himself goes forth to Preach the Gospel; the Church of Christ shall not lose by Persecution, out of the very ashes of the Saints that are slain shall arise new ones, men upon

whom a double measure of the Spirit shall be given; as it was to *Elisha* when *Elias* was taken away. And this by the way, Let us now more strictly consider what it is that is spoken of this *Enoch*: There are two remarkable things, the one is concerning his Life, and the other concerning his Death: Touching his Life it's said that *Enoch walked with God*, he walked with God; nay, through his whole life he walked with God: so many years as he lived after he begat his first son, three hundred years and upwards, the Apostle to the *Hebrews* saith, *That he pleased God*, that is his walking with God; in *Heb.* 11. 5. *By Faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death*; before his translation it's said, *He had this testimony, that he pleased God*; at the latter end of the Verse, *He walked with God:* it was his constant aim to please God, in all things he aimed at God in the whole course of his life: *He had this testimony, that he pleased God*; he lived in Faith and Obedience, and by Faith he pleased God, *For without Faith*, it's said, *it's impossible to please God.* He continually exercised Faith upon the promised Messiah that was to come, he lived in expectation to see his day: and he saw it before-hand (as *Abraham* did by Faith) and rejoiced: and so he walked with God, and by Faith he pleased God. And here is something spoken of his death, or of his change: It's said, that after he walked with God, *He was not: He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.*

Some conceive that all this is spoken of his walking with God: *He walked with God, and he was not*, he was not in himself, he walked in God and not in himself, he denied himself and followed God, he made a resignation of himself up to God, God took him up to himself, but this is something strange! I rather think the

latter

latter part doth consider the change of *Enoch*, his translation out of this life, *He was not, for God took him*; and we have good ground for this interpretation, because the Apostle gives it thus in that place before, in *Heb.* 11. 5. it's said, *By Faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him*: so *he was not*, that is, he was not of the World, he was not found any more amongst men. He is said to walk with God here upon earth, after he had walked with God three hundred years, and *he was not*, *for God took him*. It implies a special way and manner of *Enoch's* change, which was not ordinary: he died not as the rest did, but only he was changed, as those shall be, that shall be found alive when Christ shall come to be Judge of the World, they shall not die, but they shall be changed: so *Enoch* died not, but he was changed, his body did put on Incorruption, it did not cease to be, but it was changed and translated, so saith the Apostle, *He was translated, that he should not see death*. God took him up in some extraordinary way as he did *Elias*; *Elias* was translated that he should not see death, he was taken up in the sight of all his friends, Chariots and Horses of Fire took him up, and carried him into Heaven, and so 'tis very likely, that *Enoch* was carried up some such way to Heaven: He was taken away from his friends, and they knew not what was become of him, God took him, they knew not where he was; *He was not found*, saies the Apostle, which doth intimate, that his friends sought him, as the friends of *Elias*, they went to seek him when he was taken up to Heaven, so it's like he was sought for, when he was taken up to heaven, but he was not found, God took him up; the manner of his translation was extraordinary, even as that of *Elias*. *Enoch* before the Law,

and *Elias* under the Law, were taken up into heaven. But more of that hereafter. I shall only for the present make some entrance, and look upon this *Enoch* as a man that was a choice piece in his Age, in his Generation: special notice is taken of him more than of all the rest, *Enoch walked with God.*

You may observe, That in all Ages God hath some of his Servants that are more eminent than others; God hath some in all Ages, that walk more close with him, that are in a very remarkable manner holy, and gracious, and hold forth a great deal of God to the World; all the ten Patriarchs that were spoken of in the Text, they were gracious men, and they all walked with God: but it's said of *Enoch* as if he was alone; *Enoch walked with God*, which doth intimate, that he walked with God in a remarkable manner, he walked more close with God than all the rest of his Brethren, than all the rest of his Generation: *Enoch walked with God*; God hath some choice servants in all Ages: he loves all his Children dearly, as a father loves all his Children dearly, but some are nearer him than others, some are set upon the knee, and laid in the bosom when others stand by: choice affections are in the Lord to some, and made known to some. A Prince shall carry it respectively to all his Favorites, he'll shew favour to all: but yet some come nearer him than others, they know more of his mind, and are more intimate with him, they are taken into his privy Chamber, into his secret Galleries there to walk with him. And thus the Lord deals with some of his Saints: *Enoch* was a favorite in his Generation: Afterward comes *Noah*, and *Noah* was a favorite in his Generation; see *Gen.* 6. 9. *These are the Generations of Noah: Noah was a just man, and perfect in his Generation, and Noah walked with God. Noah was a just man,*

and

and perfect in his Generation, Noah walked with God in a remarkable manner, he kept more close to God than all the World beside: *But Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord*, it's said, when all the World was drowned. *Abraham* was such a man in his Generation, he was a *friend of God*, God revealed more to him than to all the World besides: *I will hide nothing from Abraham*, saies God in *Gen.* 18. 17, 18, 19. *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do*, saies God, he'll teach his Children and Servants, I will not hide from *Abraham*; he was Gods choice favourite, and therefore he will not hide from *Abraham* the thing that he will do. After *Abraham* comes *Job*, he was a favourite in his Generation: it was thought upon good ground, that he lived betwixt *Abraham* and *Moses*; when ever it was, he was a favourite in his Generation, *Hast thou considered my Servant Job, that he is a perfect and upright man, one that fears God and eschews evil, and there is none like him on the earth:* Here is a high commendation, he is a man worthy to be considered, God himself considers him, a perfect and upright man, one that walked up close with God, as there was none nigher him in his Generation, there was none like *Job*, he was the choicest Scholar that God had in the World, and God taught him more than all the World besides, he was the greatest proficient in all the School of God, God gives him high commendations. And then comes *Moses*, he is a favourite in his Generation, *He saw God face to face*: there was none like unto *Moses*, none had such communion with God as *Moses* had in his Generation, *Come thou up into the Mount*, he was Gods favourite, he walked with God as *Enoch* did, and there was none like him. And so when *Moses* was gone, *Joshua* in his Generation was one that *Fol-*

lowed God fully, none but *Caleb* and *Joshua* followed God fully, they were the choice in their Generation. And so afterward *David* he was a man after Gods heart, a choice man in his Generation. And so *Hezekiah*, and then *Josiah*, of them both there was none like them in their Generation, there was none like *Hezekiah* in his Generation, and none like *Josiah* in his Generation, they were choice favourites in their Generation. Our Lord Jesus loved all his Disciples dearly, and took care of them: but there was one of them lay in his bosom, there was one that was alwaies next him, and that was *John* the beloved Disciple; *Joh.*21. 20, 21. *Peter saw the Disciple whom Christ loved, who leaned on his Breast at the Supper*; he was nearer Christ than all the rest; and so he instructed all the Disciples, and revealed great mysteries to them all, but the greatest of mysteries he revealed unto *James*, *Peter*, and *John*, in the Mount; and none saw Christs transfiguration but they three: they were choice Pillars in their Generation. As it is in the natural body, so it is in the body of Christ, there are some members that are nearer the head than others: all do partake of the same life, and of the same spirit, which runs through the whole body; Ay, but some are nearer the head than others, there's a greater dignity put upon some than others; some are more useful than others; some are of greater growth than others, and some have more strength than others: So 'tis in the body of Christ; there are some of Christs members that he looks upon, and holds forth to the World as choice pieces, such as *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Job*, *Moses*, *Joshua* and *Caleb*, *David*, *Hezekiah* and *Josiah* were; all have not the same helps, and therefore all come not to the same growth, all have not the same means of knowledge, the same means of getting nearer God,

and

and growing up in ſpiritual ſtrength and ſtature, there are ſome that are beloved of God that are but ſeldom rained upon, upon others ſhowers of Heaven do diſtill every day.

Again, All have not the ſame Impediments, the ſame hindrances that ſome have, and therefore ſome out-ſtrip others. Grace in ſome of Gods people meets with an abundance of oppoſition, through the abundance of corruption; they meet with more temptations than others, there's more blocks caſt in the way of ſome: the World is a great impediment, and proves a great ſnare to ſome, and they are kept back from getting ſo nigh unto God as others. There are ſome that God doth inable to follow the Lamb where ever he goes; Oh, they get nigh God, they are choice men in their Generation, ſuch as are inabled to follow the Lamb where ever he goes. There are ſome that God makes very attentive unto his Word, their ſouls are continually bent towards God, and towards his Word, and they are liſtning continually to hear what God will ſpeak, and when God will ſpeak, they are nigher God than others; there are ſome that lay up the Word of God in their hearts, ponder the words of Chriſt, as *Mary* did, ſhe pondered the ſayings of Chriſt in her heart, and hid them in her heart, ſhe pondered them; why, theſe get nearer God than others. There are ſome that God makes wiſe to know their time, and to take their ſeaſon, to improve the opportunity that God puts into their hands, when God calls them to follow him, when the Lord breaths and ſtirs them up, then to ſtir up themſelves, and to take hold of his name; they are taught of God to know the opportunity and ſeaſon in which they may get nigheſt to God by following him. When God draws a ſoul after himſelf, when ſome cord of love is caſt about it, oh it breaths towards

wards God in its ſpirit, when the ſpirit of God is breathing in their hearts; now thoſe whom God thus calls to improve their opportunity, and to do the work of the Lord with all their might, and with all faithfulneſs as Chriſt did when he was upon earth, theſe are the men and women, who get near God, of whom it may be ſaid as of *Enoch*, that they walked with God above all their Generation. And for the ground of this you muſt know,

That God hath ſeveral works to put his people upon, he hath ſeveral works, ſeveral ſervices, and ſeveral ſufferings, and ſo accordingly he gives out ſtrength, and accordingly he draws into nigher communion with himſelf. There are ſome that God hath appointed for great ſervices in the world, ſuch as theſe had need be exceedingly ſtrengthened by ſweet communion with God, that their ſpirits may be upheld; and ſome God brings forth to great ſufferings, and therefore they had need have a great deal of ſtrength from God that they may be carried through. *Job* was a choice man, and God had great ſufferings for him, and there was none like him, nor no ſufferings like to his in his Generation, the Lord fitted him with abundance of grace to go through his ſufferings. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt before he was tempted had abundance of his Father, to his comfort there came a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed*; a voice from heaven doth evince and declare that he was the *Son of God*. The Lord Jeſus had great ſufferings, great conflicts, great temptations to grapple with, therefore his Father doth ſtrengthen him exceedingly: there were ſome that were ſet upon a hill, lights ſet upon a hill can't be hid, the eyes of many are upon them, the endeavours of all the powers of darkneſs are to blow out ſuch lights, the name of God is greatly intereſted,

tereſted, and greatly concerned in them, and therefore they had need have a great deal of clear light from Heaven, they had need be exceedingly comforted, and ſtrengthened in their ſpirits by the preſence of God, and by moſt near and intimate fellowſhip and communion with him; therefore the Lord diſpoſes that ſome of his ſervants ſhall be choice and excellent in their Generation, to be near to him as *Enoch* was who walked with God. Now therefore to apply things.

1. *Uſe.* I beſeech you Brethren, That you would ſeek after this high meaſure of Grace and Holineſs, that you would labour to get nigh unto God, get as cloſe unto God as may be, that you may walk with God in an eminent manner in your Generation, as *Enoch* did: you have God himſelf for your pattern before you; Oh how the Saints ſhould ſtrive to be thus minded, *Be ye perfect, for your heavenly Father is perfect*; you have God before you, you have Chriſt before you for your pattern. I do not ſay, be as holy and perfect as the reſt of your friends and neighbours, and meaſure your holineſs by theirs; but you ſhould ſtrive to go beyond all, beyond all creatures, look at none as your pattern but God and Chriſt: labour to get up to the height of eminency, the life of God in Chriſt; you can never get too nigh God, you can never have too much of him, there is no danger in following hard after God, there is certainty in the things of God. A man may have too much of the things of the world, there's danger in it, but a man cannot have too much of the knowledge of God, and of communion with God; a man may have more, and too much of the World, as he cannot uſe it to the glory of God; Oh there is danger in the World in ſtriving to be the greateſt, to be the richeſt in the World, there

is

is great danger; but there is no danger in striving to be eminent in grace, in striving to get nearer to God, and to walk close with God: this is the very glory of Heaven, it's worth the seeking after. My Brethren, press hard to get more nigh to God, to stick close to God; it's the glory of heaven: heaven differs only in degrees from that which is given out to the Saints here; it's the same in essence; it's the glory of heaven to know God, to enjoy God, to walk with God, *To follow the Lamb whereſoever he goes*; it's the glory of heaven: and therefore I beseech you, that you would now look upon it as your glory to follow God fully, as your glory to follow the Lamb whereſoever he goes.

2. *Use.* In the second place, It may be a word of incouragement unto poor Christians, weak Christians, you that are sensible you are not the *Enochs* of your Generation: Oh the distance that is in your spirits (you see) betwixt God and you! Are you pressing on after God, why then let me say to you, That you have the same for essence, that the best of the Saints have, though you have not the same in degree; I say, you that have the least interest in Christ, you have the same for essence which the best Saints on earth have, and the same which the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven have, the difference is only in degrees, it's not in kind, and therefore press on hard that you may have more of it. It's not impossible that you should come to the same height with them, because the difference is only in degrees, it's not in kind. It's true, where there is nothing but gifts and parts, there the difference is in kind. If a man hath the most excellent parts in the world, he can never attain unto that which a Christian hath; parts can never attain unto grace, but the least measure of grace may grow up to the greatest in time, for the difference is only in degree.

gree. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a grain of Mustard seed*: why, a grain of Mustard seed when it's sown, you know how little it is, but it grows up to a great height: where there is rooting in Christ, where there is a principle of grace in any soul, there shall be a growth, and that soul shall never leave growing till it grow higher and higher, as tall as heaven it self, and there it hath its full growth and its full perfection. But let me tell you that say, you shall never be eminent in your Generation; let me say thus to you, You have the same Mediator, that the chiefest of the Saints have, even you that are weakest; all they have, comes through his hand, and it's for his sake: you have the same Mediator that they have, Oh why do you not improve this Mediator more, that more may be given out through him? If you were more in improving and more in waiting upon him, seeing you have the same Mediator, you shall have the same welcom in heaven with the most choice of Saints: you have the same Fountain to go unto, and therefore do not say, you shall never be eminent in your Generation, you have the same fountain, *All we from his fulness receive grace for grace*; the choicest have nothing but what they receive from Christ and his fulness, and the same fountain is as full for you as for them; nay, there is the same freedom of access for you as for them, there's the same freeness in Christ to be given out to you; it's a fountain set open, set open for *Judas* and for *Jerusalem*, it's set open for the weakest, that they may come and drink and be cheared in their spirits; nay, let me tell you that the heart of Christ is more careful of you than of others, the heart of Christ is most careful of his weak ones. Oh, what provision doth he make for them? *Simon Peter, dost thou love me? why then keep my Lambs:* if thou lovest me, *Peter*, by all the love

thou

thou beareſt to me, then take care of my weak ones, *Feed my Lambs*: and he takes care himſelf, great care; in *Iſa.* 40. 11, 12. it's ſaid there what Chriſt the good Shepherd ſhall do, that *He ſhall gather the Lambs with his arms, and carry them in his boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young:* there is the ſpecial care that Chriſt takes of you that are weak.

Nay, Further for your incouragement, let me tell you, that there is the ſame bleſſing upon you that is upon the ſtrongeſt of thoſe Saints that God hath upon the earth: therefore there is way made for your growth and increaſe; when God makes the new creature, when ever he brings forth the new creature he bleſſes it: as when he created the World, he gave it his bleſſing, *Increaſe and Multiply*, and ſo to the Trees, *Be fruitful*: and ſo where ever the new creature is, there is the ſpecial bleſſing of the Creator goes along with it: he ſaith to them all, *Be fruitful and multiply*, be fruitful in old age, and in *Rev.* 22. 11. *Let him that is holy, be holy ſtill:* there's a bleſſing upon every righteous holy man though never ſo weak, let him be holy ſtill, oh let him be more holy, let him increaſe in holineſs and righteouſneſs; there's the bleſſing of Chriſt in the New Teſtament, oh wait and look for this bleſſing, and know that the bleſſing of Chriſt is prevalent: the Curſe of Chriſt is heavy, it made the Figg-tree die to the very root, wither to the very roots: but the bleſſing of Chriſt can make roots that are withered to ſpring up and flouriſh.

But again (to ſay no more) for your incouragement, Conſider what promiſes the Lord hath made to the weak, to thoſe that are weak of ſtrength, which promiſes are in a ſpecial manner to be accompliſhed in the latter daies, as in *Zach.* 12. 8. *In that day ſhall the Lord defend the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and he that*

that is feeble among them at that day, shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them. *Zachariah* saith that there's a time a coming, that the weak and feeble shall be as *David*, and they who are as *David*, shall be as the *Angel of the Lord.* *David* I told you was a choice man in his Generation, he was a man after Gods own heart, that walked with God most part of his life, he was strong to do great things for God; now he that is weak shall be as *David*, and he that is as *David* shall be made strong as the Angel of the Lord. When you are in the midst of the sense of your weakness, look upon these promises, and desire the Lord, that he would hasten the accomplishment of them. Well, then I beseech you suffer me to press this upon you, that you would labour to get as nigh God as possible you may, get as nigh God as may be; do not think it enough that you have an interest in Christ, that you have that which will carry you to heaven; Oh, let the spirit of a Child, of a son, this day be set upon you: seek not enough only to carry you to heaven, but seek more than so, seek that that will make you eminent unto God in your Generation, that which will make you exceeding serviceable unto God, and to your Generation in your Age, even this strife should there be to get into the very heart of God, Oh that God would reveal this to you, that you are one of his choice favourites. The nigher you are to Christ, the more you shall see of heaven, the more you shall know of his Mind, of his Will, and of his Word: you think that Disciple was a happy man that leaned on Christs bosom, the Disciple whom Christ loved, sat next him, leaned on his breast; Oh how should you press after this in spirit, to get as nigh Christ as may be, to lean on the bosom or breast of Christ as that beloved Disciple did! I tell you, you that do so,

you

you shall hear more from Christ than others do. Christ sometimes speaks softly, and there's none hear what Christ speaks but those that sit next him; the soul that sits next him and cleaves closest unto him, as *Enoch* did, hears many a word that other Christians cannot hear: *Enoch* had choice things revealed unto him, God did reveal things to come unto him, because he was the choice of God, and sat close to God. Oh, that you would labour after this, to get near unto God, there's many sweet refreshments that you may meet with, there's many a good bit that you shall get of him, which others of his Children don't taste of, by reason they follow him not close. Oh don't lose the sweetness of this! How sweet is it to hear a word from Christ, and how refreshing is that portion that Christ carves out: Strive in your Generation that you may be like *Enoch*, who in his Generation stuck close to God, and walked with God.

SER-

SERMON II.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

I Made entrance the last day, where I opened the words to you, we considered that commendation that was given to *Enoch, He walked with God*; so did the rest of the ten Patriarchs spoken of, but notice is taken only of *Enoch, Enoch walked with God*, he walked with God in a special manner, he walked more close with God than the rest of the men in that Generation, and therefore it's spoken of him as if he alone had walked with God, *And Enoch walked with God.*

Two things I propounded to be discust, before I come to the main general Proposition:

First of all, That the Lord hath some special Servants that walk more close with him in their Generation than others. And then,

Secondly, That the Lord takes special notice of such; here is a special character upon them, some special honour that God puts upon such. I spake of the former the last day; and we reflected upon it in way of Application.

I desire that all Gods people would labour to get as nigh God as may be: don't content your selves that you have interest in Christ, that you have that which will

carry you to heaven; it's a poor low spirit to take up here: but seek after that which may make you an honour unto God, and serviceable in your Generation, that you may walk with God in special, as sometimes *Enoch* did. We spake also by way of incouragement unto those that are weak, as if that you should never get so nigh God, that you should never be able to walk with God as *Enoch*. You have the same principle that have interest in Christ as the strongest; though you be weak and never so weak, Christ is the same principle of life in you, and therefore you don't differ from them; you look upon Saints that are remarkable, and you are discouraged when you view the distance between you and them: but know, the difference is not in kind but degree; if the difference were in kind, there were no hopes of attaining to that measure, all the gifts and parts in the World can't grow up to grace; but where there is a principle of grace, though never so small, though it be but as a grain of Mustard seed, it shall grow, and never leave growing, till it grow as high as heaven. You have also the same Mediator (though weak) in whose name you may come and plead acceptance, as well as the strongest; you have the same Fountain to go unto, infinite fulness that is ever running over, willing to communicate; there's the same freeness of access for you, this Fountain is set open for you as much as for the strongest; it's the blessing of the new creature, *Be strong, let him that is holy, be holy still, and him that is righteous, be righteous still*, in *Rev.* 22. 11. The blessing is upon him that hath Christ and Righteousness, let him be more righteous, and more holy, let him go from strength to strength, until he appear before God in *Sion*; this is the blessing upon him: therefore your weakness should be no cause of discouragement. You have also the Promises, that

the

the time shall come, *That those that be weak shall be as David* (a Prophecie concerning the latter times) he that is weak shall be as *David*, and he that is as strong as *David* shall be as the Angel of the Lord: So that you that are weak in your own apprehensions should be strengthened, even as *David*, who was one that walked with God in a remarkable manner in his Generation. Therefore get as nigh God and Christ as may be: sit at his Foot-stool; the nearer you are to Christ, the more you sit under the dropping of his lips, the more sweetness of Christ will fall into your spirits; the more his eye is over you, the better you are in his thoughts, and you shall have many a good bit, if you follow him closer than others. To proceed to the second Proposition,

2. Prop. *That the Lord takes special notice of such as do walk with him in a remarkable manner.* The Lord takes special notice of such, there is some special character of honour which the Lord will put upon such as walk with him so as *Enoch* did: it's written twice in this Chapter, that *Enoch walked with God.* God will have special notice taken of him; they all walked with God, the rest of the Patriarchs, but notice is taken only of *Enoch*'s walking. The New Testament takes notice of *Enoch*'s walking with God: The Apostle *Jude* speaks of *Enoch the seventh from Adam*, which I had occasion to speak of the last day. And the Apostle to the *Hebrews* takes notice of *Enoch*, as one that liv'd by Faith, and by Faith was translated; and before he was translated he had this Testimony, *That he pleased God.*

But I shall shew you how the Lord takes notice, special notice of such of his Servants as do walk closely with him, in divers particulars.

1. First of all, The Lord bears witness to them, and

he bears witnesse of them in a special manner, I say the Lord bears witnesse to them, and bears witnesse of them. He bears witnesse *to them*; he spake evidently, clearly unto them; he clears up their evidences for heaven; he speaks by his spirit unto theirs, and they are his witnesses in the World; they bear witnesse to the name of God, and the truth of God, to the Word of the Lord, the Lives of such of his Saints bear witnesse to the Word, they are a Comment, an Exposition of the Word of the Lord, and therefore the Lord bears witnesse to their spirits, they have special work to do for God in the World, and therefore God comes in with a special witnesse and testimony of his spirit with theirs, that he might strengthen them, and carry them through all their undertakings which are for God. *Paul* was a chosen vessel, and was to bear up the name of God before the Gentiles, and therefore the Lord comes and speaks unto his spirit in a special manner in strengthening of *Paul*, *Paul fear not*, *I am with thee.* The Prophet *Jeremiah* was to bear witnesse for God, to do great things for God, and therefore God bears witnesse to his Spirit in *Jer.* 1. 18. he sends him forth and tells him, *He had made him a Brazen Wall, and an Iron Pillar*, and he would carry him through all the work, and all his enemies should not be able to harm him: they wait for the witnesse of God, for the witnesse of the Spirit of God, their souls are alwaies hearkening, and they are listning what God shall speak: they won't be put off with any other Testimony till God speaks, their soul is not satisfied, God therefore comes in, and by his spirit witnesses it himself, he writes their evidence fair, and writes it with the blood of his Son, and casts it into their bosom, and they are careful to keep their evidence clear when God hath once given it out to them, they are careful to keep

it

it from blots and blurs, and to read over their evidences in Christ, and put it into their bosom: there's nothing they delight in, but in reading it again and again; and therefore the Lord doth witness unto such. And he doth not only bear witness to them, but he bears witness *of them*; a high honour for God to bear witness of poor creatures: to bear witness of them, *Hast thou considered my Servant Job?* Job 1.1. God gave witness of him, That *Job is a perfect and upright man, one that feared God; he was one that eschewed evil:* God bears witness of him: and so in *Job* 2.3. the Lord saith, *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that he is a perfect and upright man, none like him in the earth?* Mark, what a high Testimony God gives of him: *Job* durst not say so of himself, he durst not stand upon his own perfection, he durst not say he was perfect, but God said so: his friends would not say so of him, but they accused him, and said he was an Hypocrite, because they saw the hand of God went out remarkably against him; Ay, but God bears witness of him, whatsoever his friends say, God will convince them, that they judged with unrighteous judgement: therefore see what God saies to *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, *Job* 42.7. *My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends: for you have not spoken of me the thing that is right, like my servant Job. Job was a perfect and upright man.* Their walking with God is hid from the World, it's in secret, their spirits are in secret carried after God, which are the choicest, and most curious waies of their walking with him in the World, they see not, and can't eye their walking with God, but God will take notice of what they have done for him in secret, and it shall be published upon the house top; God will bear witness of such of his Servants

as walk closely with him in their Generation, he will bear witness of them before men; will bear witness of them either in their lives, or at their death, or else after death; in their lives, as he did of *Job*; at their deaths, he will give such a testimony of them at death as shall make even their very enemies wish with *Balaam*, *Oh that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my latter end may be like unto his*; and then he will bear witness of them after death, when they are gone, I say, many Ages and Generations after they are dead and gone, God will bear witness of them, as in *Heb.* 11. where you have it recorded of all the Patriarchs, that by Faith they pleased God: and thus God will bear witness of such of his servants as will close with him in their Generation. And this is the first thing that God takes notice of in them, so as to bear witness of them, and to them.

2. But again, Secondly, God sets up such of his servants as *Patterns* to others for them to imitate: He sets them upas patterns; this is a high honour to them for others to look unto: they are the very Images of God, they are the very Images of Christ, and therefore God sets them to be patterns to be imitated. *Abraham* that walked with God, is made a pattern to all in his Generation; and *Moses* a pattern of meekness, and *Job* a pattern of patience, *You have heard of the patience of Job*; and therefore saith the Apostle, *James* 5. 7. *And therefore be ye also patient unto the coming of our Lord. Be ye also patient; you have heard of the patience of Job:* It's true, God himself is the first and highest pattern, *Be ye holy as your heavenly Father is holy, be ye perfect as he is perfect*; there's a suitableness in the spirits and affections of the Saints in their desires unto this pattern of God himself which is set before them; for as the perfection of

God

God is infinite, as the holineſs of God is infinite, ſo there is a kind of infiniteneſs in their deſires and affections in their purſuits after God; but when they look upon their actings and attainments, they ſee they come infinitely ſhort of God, and are apt to be diſcouraged, and therefore now the Lord hath ſet up other patterns for his weak Saints to look unto, and therefore they are ſuch as themſelves, to ſee how much they have attained to in their Generation. *You have heard of the patience of Job:* and ſo in the ſame Chapter, the Apoſtle tells them of *Elias*, a pattern which God hath ſet before them: he calls them to wait upon God by prayer; *Elias*, though a man ſubject to paſſion as we are, yet *He prayed and it rained not*, and *he prayed again and it did rain:* A man ſubject to the like paſſion as you are, and yet he prayed and it rained not, and he prayed, and it rained; therefore look you to be as patterns; this is another honour that God is pleaſed to put upon his ſervants, he makes them patterns to others. But again,

3. Thirdly, The Lord doth *boaſt* of ſuch of his ſervants as do thus: he *boaſts and makes it his glory*, he ſets them before, for all the world to look upon and behold his glory in them, in *Rev.* 14. 4. *Theſe are they which follow the Lamb whereſoever he goes*, let all the world look upon them, and behold the glory of God ſhining in them: theſe are they that follow the Lamb whereever he goes; you know what God ſaid to Satan concerning *Job*, *Job* 1. 8. and 2. 3. *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job?* I have one ſervant that is worth the conſidering, ſaith God, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job?* Haſt thou ſet thine heart upon my ſervant *Job*, ſaith he? Thou haſt been compaſſing the earth, but haſt thou ſeen ſuch a one as my ſervant *Job?* Thou haſt many ſlaves to boaſt on, and

many drudges, but I'le compare with thee above all: my servant *Job*, hast thou considered him? he is a perfect and upright man, *one that feareth God and escheweth evil.* And so *David*, God seems to glory in him, that he had such a servant as *David*, in *Acts* 13. 22. *I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, that shall execute all my Will:* as good a servant as I desire to have, he will fulfill all my Will, and he is according to mine own heart, he will do all my Will: God glories in it that he had such a servant as *David.*

4. Fourthly, As God glories in such, so he *delights* exceedingly in such, as walk closely with him, they are the Object of his delight: it's said in *Cant.* 7. 5. that *the King is held in his Galleries:* he sees such an excellent piece, he is held by his affections, and he cannot get out, *Oh thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck:* Behold the beauty of thine eye, that eye of Faith, that eye of thine ravishes my heart, it wounds the heart of Christ, it made him love-sick, there was such a dart from the eye that ravish'd his heart, great delight the Lord takes in such; Oh, saith the Father, here's the very Image of my son in such and such a Saint, here's the very likeness of my son, I can't but look upon this picture with delight, here's the very countenance of my son, the very eye of my son, Doves eyes, the very cast of his eye, and it's alwaies looking heaven-ward, the very cast of the eye of thee my son: here's the very lip of my son that dropt sweet smelling Myrrh; here is the very gate of my son, his very carriage, every foot-step is like the foot-steps of my son, I can't but delight; the Father saw the Image of the son in such, and the son sees the Image of the Father

Father in such, and therefore can't but rejoyce and delight in them with exceeding great joy. That's a fourth. But again,

5. Fifthly, The Lord doth *manifest much love* unto such: there's another special favour that such as walk close with God meet withal: Oh that all this which is spoken might refresh your hearts, The Lord manifests special love and favour to such; he communicates more of his love, they shall have the very heart of God, God unfolds, he'll unbowel himself unto them; the Lord can't contain it, he falls upon them, falls upon their neck and kisses them, as *Joseph* did upon his Brethrens necks, in *Gen.* 45. 14, 15. he could contain no longer, fell upon their necks, discovered himself unto them, I am your brother, saith he, *I am Joseph*: there's abundance of love, precious love that the Lord doth reveal unto such; he will satiate and satisfie their soul with kindness; there is a promise that is made in the *Psalms* 36. 8. *He will satiefie their souls with his loving kindness, they shall drink abundantly, and be satisfied with the fatness of thy house:* they shall taste abundance, not only so but be satisfied, taste and be satisfied, with the goodness, and love of the Lord; there's none drinks so much, nor none meet with such soul-satisfaction, as those that walk close with God.

6. Sixthly, The Lord *reveals his secrets unto them*, he'll with-hold nothing; *Shall I hide from Abraham?* The Lord will reveal it unto such of his Servants, *Shall I hide from Abraham?* Gen. 18. 17, 18. *seeing Abraham shall become a great Nation, and he will teach his Children:* The Lord knows to whom he gives out, such as will give out to others and be communicative to others, and therefore the Lord reveals himself unto them: they stand nigher God than others, therefore

they

they see more than others, understand more than others, and standing upon the hill-top they see further than others: God reveals special things to them: *Enoch the seventh from Adam Propheſied of theſe, ſaying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his Saints, to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* Again,

7. Seventhly, The Lord *imployes ſuch upon ſpecial Services*: ſuch as walk more cloſely with him, ſhall do the great works of God in the world; great things are ſpoken of to come to paſs in the latter daies, and who ſhall be Gods Inſtruments to bring his great works to paſs? Why, the Lord will make wiſe ſuch as walk cloſely with him, in *Rev.* 17. 14. The Army of the Lamb, ſuch as hee'll do great things by, they were ſuch as are *called faithful and choſen*; there's that commendation given of them, *And they that are with him are called faithful and choſen:* Theſe ſhall be his Inſtruments of the great work to bring down *Babylon* by, to do his great work by, theſe ſhall be men of choice ſpirits, called, choſen and faithful, God will make uſe of them to bear up his name in the world, and he will uſe them as Inſtruments to bring to paſs the great things he hath ſpoken of: they are Inſtruments that will give all to God, and therefore God will make them Inſtruments of great work to him; and it's their ſtudy that the Lord alone may be exalted, and therefore the Lord will make uſe of ſuch for ſpecial ſervice. But again in the eighth place,

8. Eighthly, The Lord takes ſpecial notice of them, for he *puts ſuch a luſtre* upon them as ſhall make them to ſhine in the eye of the world; this is another honour

nour that God is careful to put upon them, as that they shall shine in the eye of the world; that they shall either be respected or feared. Sometimes the Lord makes the very wicked in the world to respect them. *John* that was a burning and shining light, *John Baptist*, how did God make even *Herod* himself to respect him? Even the wicked of the world are convinced by them, and God doth inforce the world to approve of them, to approve of the way they walk in, and to approve of their Integrity. There's a promise in *Rev.* 2. to the Church of *Philadelphia*, that God would make their very enemies to come and worship before them, and to acknowledge that God hath loved them; there is such a lustre upon them, upon their spirits, and lives, and carriages, when they walk close with God, that the men of the world are forc'd to confess as of Christ, *Never man spake as this man*, and certainly these men are gracious men, what ever the world thinks of them, and oh that there were no worse, and that I might die the righteous mans death, that my latter end may be as his; they are thus convinced by that lustre that is upon them, or at least, God makes the world to fear them; they are a dread unto the world: *Abraham* was mightily feared by *Abimelech*, and *Abimelech* feared him, and sent to make a Covenant with him in *Gen.* 21. 22. he sent his great Captain to make a Covenant with *Abraham*, and why? Because they perceived that God was with him, and God prospered him, and therefore they are afraid that *Abraham* should be their enemy; though they were strangers to God, yet the fear of his people, the fear of *Abraham* fell upon them: what a dread is many a godly man unto the wicked, their very conversations do convince them, the stirrings of God, the appearances of God in them do convince them: and therefore they cry out many times of them

as

as the Devils did of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, *Why art thou come to torment us:* So a man that walks close with God is even a torment upon them: the fear and dread of them fall upon their enemies; that's another honour that God puts upon those that walk closely with him.

9. Ninthly, Again, To such as walk closely with God, there's an *abundant entrance for them into the Kingdom of God*, I say, such shall meet with an abundance of entrance into the Kingdom of God; so saies the Apostle in 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. He bids them there *Give all diligence to make their calling and election sure*, be not idle, do not stand at a stay, press on, *For so there shall be an entrance made, an abundant entrance shall be ministred unto you, into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:* All Gods people do not meet with this abundant entrance, there are some that creep in at the narrow gate, some sail to Heaven with quarter wind, others go with full sails of Assurance. Now this seems to be promised to those that walk most closely with God, that give all diligence to wait upon God, and all diligence to increase in knowledge, and grace, full sails of Assurance and an abundant entrance shall be ministred unto them into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But again,

10. Tenthly, In the last place, Such as walk with God, God makes their *memorial to be sweet*, the memory of the just shall be sweet when they are dead and gone, their names shall not rot, they shall be Embalmed, God will have them to be remembred unto many Generations; *Abel*, though dead, he is yet remembred, God will take care that his Saints shall be remembred. *Enoch* walked with God, and though he was cut off, yet *Enoch* must be remembred, though

it

it were many hundred years before *Moſes*, yet God would have *Moſes* to write it twice, *Enoch walked with God.* Now God will have the very men in the world to honour their Names when they are dead and gone; the Prophets many of them were cut off by the wicked Jews, but God cauſed their names to be precious when they were gone: and the Scribes and Phariſees (as wicked as they were) yet, notwithſtanding, they honoured the name of a Prophet; and your Fathers killed the Prophets (though odious whilſt they lived, though cut off, as Chriſt himſelf was, and thought not worthy to live on the face of the Earth) yet their Names are precious and in memory: and thus you ſee that the Lord takes ſpecial notice of ſuch of his Servants as walk moſt cloſely with him; he knows that the Devil takes ſpecial notice of them, and therefore he'll take notice of them; he knows that the world takes ſpecial notice of them to envy them, the ſpight of the world is againſt them, and therefore God will take them into ſpecial favour with himſelf: there are none ſo hated, none ſo maligned as thoſe that walk moſt cloſe with God; there is no ſuch eye-ſore to a carnal man, as one that walks cloſe with God: Oh, the light and glory of God that doth appear in ſuch a Saint doth convince the men of the world, and upbraids them, ſhames them, ſets their Conſciences on work, convinces them at what diſtance they are from God, and therefore it is that the world hates them, there's none that meets with more ſpight from the world than they, and therefore the Lord takes ſpecial notice of ſuch, and there's none that the Devil ſtrikes more at, than thoſe that walk cloſeſt with God: for they are like a light ſet upon a Hill, and the Prince of the Air will endeavour to blow it out; they are as Beacons ſet upon a Hill, and the Devil knows that if he can throw them down, there

will

will fall many with them. *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant Job?* haſt thou ſet thy heart upon him? I doubt not but thou haſt conſidered him, thou haſt maligned him, ſought to caſt him down from his ſtation. *Simon, Simon, Satan has a deſire to have you, that he may winnow you, but I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not*; of all others, Satan deſires to have *Peter*, that he might winnow him. Such as are moſt eminent, the more eminent, the more doth Satan deſire to winnow them, and therefore the Lord ſteps in, *I have prayed for them*; Chriſt ſteps in to plead for them in a ſpecial manner, he takes care of them: As the darts of the Devil are thrown principally at ſuch, ſo the Lord himſelf will be their Buckler, and their defence.

Now Brethren, from all that hath been ſpoken, reflect upon it; And oh that it may ſtir you up to endeavour to walk more cloſe with God; not only to walk with God, but to walk with God as *Enoch* did; it's not enough to be gracious, but what ſingular thing do you for God? I know that this will make you vile in the eyes of the world, but be you reſolute in the waies of God: It will be a blot to you in the eyes of the world, but it will be an honour to you in the eyes of God, who judges in truth and righteouſneſs; and therefore if the world ſpite you for this, for walking more cloſe with God, for embracing the truth of the times, ſay, If this be to be vile, I'le yet be more vile, and know that it ſhall not be labour loſt, I ſay, it ſhall not be labour loſt, to endeavour to walk thus cloſely with God as *Enoch* did, you ſhall meet with that refreſhment in God, which will abundantly anſwer what you ſhall loſe in the world, what you ſhall part withal in the world: the ſweetneſs that you ſhall meet withal in Communion with God, it ſhall abundantly ſatisfie for the loſs of all creature comforts whatſoever, if

you

you ſhall loſe any thing for walking thus cloſely with him.

I ſhall ſay no more, Your memories ſhall be precious in Gods ſight, when rich men, and great men, and men of parts ſhall rot and periſh, die, and come to nothing, and their names ſhall periſh with them and rot; Why, the names of the righteous, ſuch as walk cloſe with God in their Generation, their names ſhall be as a Box of Oyntment poured forth, and they ſhall be ſweet and precious to God and to his Saints throughout all Generations. And thus I have ſhewed you theſe two particulars, That God hath ſome of his Servants in all Generations, that walk more cloſe with him than others; and ſecondly, That the Lord takes ſpecial notice of ſuch, and ſets ſome ſpecial badge of Honour upon them; the main Point in hand is ſtill behind.

SER-

SERMON III.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

I Have already considered two Propositions that did arise from some particular consideration, before I came to the main; First, In that *Enoch* is taken notice of above the rest; here are ten Patriarchs spoken of in this Chapter, but it's said of *Enoch* only, that he *walked with God*: they all walked with God, but he in a special manner. God hath some of his Servants in all Ages that walk more close with him than others; that was the first Proposition. And then Secondly, That the Lord takes special notice of such: here's more notice taken of *Enoch* than of all the rest, *Enoch walked with God*. And there is one particular more before I come to the main Observation,

And that is, The consideration of the *Time* in which *Enoch* lived: It was in evil times; men began exceedingly to degenerate, the world began to grow exceeding wicked, and was filled with violence, and therefore it was that *Enoch* did breath out threatnings against them:

them : he breathed out threatnings of Judgement againſt the men of his Generation, which the Apoſtle *Jude* doth apply to the men of that Age in which he lived, in *Jude* 14, 15. it's ſaid there (ſpeaking of the wickedneſs of his Generation) *And Enoch the ſeventh from Adam, Propheſied of theſe, ſaying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints, to execute Judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him:* the Prophet it's very probable did Propheſie this againſt the men of his Generation, they being exceedingly corrupt; and the Apoſtle doth apply it unto the Age in which he lived, becauſe it was like unto the Age in which *Enoch* lived, which was very corrupt; ſo that you ſee (and it's very obſervable) that in the *time* in which *Enoch* lived, that Generation was very corrupt, yet he walked with God. It affords us this Propoſition to pitch upon, That

The Lord takes it exceeding kindly, when his people walk cloſely with him in evil times, it's the great commendation of the Saints then to walk cloſely with God: it was the commendation of the Church of *Pergamus* in *Rev.* 2. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwelleſt, even where Satans ſeat is, and thou holdeſt faſt my name, and haſt not denied my Faith, even in thoſe daies wherein Antipas my faithful Martyr was ſlain, who was ſlain among you, where Satan dwelleth.* This was the great commendation of that Church, that though ſhe dwelt where Satans ſeat was, in the midſt of wicked men where the Devil rules, where the Devil hath his Throne, yet there thou haſt not denied my Faith, but there thou holdeſt faſt my truth: this Chriſt took exceeding kindly. It was the

great commendation of *Job*, that he was a perfect man, he was a perfect and upright man, though he dwelt in the Land of *Uz*; he was a man that dwelt in the Land of *Uz*, a perfect and upright man, he was upright in the midst of a sinful people: they were of the posterity of *Esau* that inhabited that place, a crooked Generation, and yet *Job* was an upright man amongst them; that was his great commendation. It was the great commendation of *Noah* that he was a just man in an unjust world; it's said, the whole earth was filled with violence in *Noah*'s daies, and then *Noah* was a just and perfect man. It was the great commendation of *Joseph*, that he feared the Lord amongst the *Egyptians*, he dwelt amongst those that had not the fear of the Lord amongst them, and yet he retained the fear of the Lord. And so it was the great commendation of *David*, that his spirit was carried after God, not only when he was in *Jerusalem*, but when he was among the Heathen, when he was amongst the Inhabitants of *Meshek*, when he was in the Tents of *Kedar*, *Woe is me, that I am to dwell with the Inhabitants of Meshek*, &c. and yet even then *David*'s heart was carried after God, and that was *David*'s great commendation. It was one of the glories and beauties of Christ himself, That he was holy and righteous in a sinful world, *As the Apple-tree in the midst of the Trees in the Forest, so is my Beloved among the Sons*, Cant. 2. 3. He was an Apple-tree in the midst of wild Trees, when he was compassed about with Bryars, Thorns and Thistles, and Crab-trees, yet he continued a pleasant Apple-tree, and brought forth delightful fruit to God and man. Now for the clearing of this Point, That *the Lord takes it exceeding kindly, when his people walk close with him in evil times*,

I shall

I shall shew you, First, What the evil times are; And then Secondly, What it is to walk with God in evil times. And Thirdly, Make it evident, that this is exceeding acceptable unto God, which will make way for the Application.

First, If you enquire what those evil times are in which close walking with God is so exceeding acceptable?

1. First, Times of *General Apostasie*: times of great corruption, and of General Apostasie from God, from the truth, and from the waies of God, and from the worship of God; when men shall lose not only the power, but the very form of Godliness; when such as seem to be like Stars, shall be swept down; and when most men are carried away with the stream of looseness, it's an evil time, and then to walk with God is exceeding precious: Such was the time of *Noah*; in the time in which *Noah* lived the whole world was corrupt, and the whole earth was filled with violence; Ay, but then *Noah* walked with God in his Generation, and that was exceeding acceptable. And so again, we have other Instances of the like in *Hos.* 11. 12. It was the great commendation of *Judah*, that when the people of *Israel* had corrupted themselves, when *Israel* had gone astray from God, from his worship, and from his truth, then *Judah* was found faithful with God, *Ephraim has compassed me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit, but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Saints*; *Judah* still holds fast, or *Judah* leaves a witness to his God, bears witness to the truth of God, and is faithful to the Saints, faithful to the Prophets, and that was the great commendation of *Judah*, to be faithful at that time; in a time of general corruption: And so again in *Mal.* 3. 14. It was a very evil, a very corrupt time, and

God took it exceeding kindly that his people did hold up for him: *Ye have said, it is in vain to serve the Lord, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord? and now we call the proud happy, yea they that work wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are even delivered:* but what follows? mark the 16 Verse, *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another,* &c. The people were wofully corrupt, God had a few names there that he kept faithful to himself, they that feared the Lord even then, when the time was so evil, they spake often one to another, and a Book of remembrance was written.

2. Secondly, *Times of sore persecution*; times of persecution are evil times, and then to walk with God is exceeding acceptable; such was the time in which *Elijah* lived; it was a time of great persecution, *Jezebel* had slain all the Lords Prophets, there was none in all the Land durst appear for God, and therefore (he thought) he had been left alone, *Lord they have slain thy Prophets, and left me alone:* and yet *Elijah* stands up for God; there was none in all the Land durst appear for God, and therefore *Elijah* thought he had been left alone, 1 *King.* 19. 14. And yet *Elijah* stood up for God, and with an undaunted spirit bare witness and stood up for God: this the Lord took exceeding kindly at *Elijah's* hand. What a gracious promise is made to the Church of *Philadelphia*, because she stood it out in evil times, *Because thou hast kept the Word of my patience:* Thou hast kept my Word with patience, thou hast kept my truth, notwithstanding all the opposition thou hast met with, that truth which was most opposed, that truth which was most persecuted, that which was the truth of the times thou hast kept, and thou hast kept it with patience, notwithstanding

ſtanding all thy ſuffering, notwithſtanding all oppoſition, *Therefore I will keep thee in the hour of temptation that is coming upon the World.*

3. Thirdly, Times of *Temptation* are evil times, and then to walk cloſely with God is acceptable: when Satan himſelf, or by his Inſtruments ſhall endeavour to beat ſouls from their ſtanding, when he ſhall endeavour to turn them aſide from God, then to hold faſt, is taken exceeding well. It is the great deſign of the Devil by himſelf, or wicked men, thus to ſtrike at Gods people; what do you get by your cloſe walking with God? Why, you get nothing but blows, nothing but ſtripes, and you are afflicted more than any; it was never worſe with you, than ſince you began to follow hard after God; this is Satans temptation, and now to hold faſt is very acceptable: thus it was with *Job*, *Job* 2. 9. the Devil tempted him by his wife, ſaies ſhe to him, *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine Integrity? Curſe God and die.* Doſt thou ſtill retain thy Integrity; what, wilt thou ſtill walk with God? What haſt thou got by walking with him? Thou ſeeſt how ſad a condition thou art brought into, I would never follow that God any longer, I would curſe him and die: it's a ſore temptation, but *Job* ſtill ſtands in his Integrity, *Thou ſpeakeſt like one of the fooliſh women, ſhall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and ſhall not we receive evil? Thou ſpeakeſt like one of the fooliſh women.* But again,

4. Fourthly, Times of *Affliction* are times of trial, and then it's moſt acceptable for Saints to walk with God: Times of Affliction, when God ſeems to frown, and God ſtretches his hand out againſt his own people, for them yet to purſue after God in their ſpirits, this is very acceptable; to run to God when God ſeems to ſmite them, to run into his arms, when they ſee he

is angry, to run under his shadow, when God seems to beat them sore; Why, this is very pleasing unto God: Thus it was with *Job*, though God stretcht out his hand against him, yet he would not stretch out his hand to iniquity, but still he kept his integrity: he was in a sad condition, he was stript naked of all he had in the world, as you read in *Job* 1.21. and though God make him naked, he'll walk with God; though God lay him naked, destitute of all comforts, he blesses the name of God when all was taken from him, and it's said, in all this *Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* That's the fourth evil time, in which walking with God is acceptable. But I shall speak most to the first of these, because that concerns *Enoch* most, *viz.* Times of General corruption, times of declining, times of Apostasie, then to walk with God is exceeding acceptable.

Quest. Then what is it to walk with God in corrupt times, or when do the servants of God walk with him in corrupt times?

Answ. 1. I Answer, First of all, when they embrace the truth of the times, those truths that are most opposed, when they shall countenance those truths that are most discountenanced, when they will not shut out the light, the truth that God holds forth in their Generation, though the truth cost them dear, though they must buy it, though they suffer the loss of all for the truth, though it cost them the loss of their comforts, the loss of their good names, the loss of their Friends, the loss of Estate, yet it's the truth of Christ, and it's the truth of the times: When God shall thus cause his servants to embrace those scorned, persecuted, and opposed truths of the times in which they live (as every Age hath its special truth) wherein they are to walk with God in a corrupt Generation. But again,

2. Se-

2. Secondly, To walk with God in a corrupt Generation, is to practise those waies of holiness, and righteousness, and to shew forth those graces which are most contrary to the wickedness of the times; this is walking with God in a corrupt time: I say, to practise those waies of holiness and righteousness, and hold forth those graces, which are contrary to the wickedness of the times: and therefore it was *Job*'s great commendation, that he was upright, that he was an upright man in a crooked Generation, he lived amongst a crooked people. And it was the great commendation of *Noah* that he practised righteousness; it's said, he was a just man when the world was most unjust, it's said, *The earth was filled with violence*; there was no righteousness in *Noah*'s daies, and then *Noah* was a just man, he was a lover of justice and righteousness, he was a follower of it, a pattern at that time when there was nothing but unjustness and violence in those times: and thus to walk with God in a corrupt time is very pleasing and acceptable. But again,

3. Thirdly, To walk with God in a corrupt time, is then, when the Servants of God shall stir up others to cleave close to God at that time: this is part of their service at such time to endeavour to strengthen, and to hold up the hands and the hearts of one another, in declining and sinful times; you may remember the place before, *Mal.* 3. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*; when the time was woefully corrupt, this was the service of that Generation, then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, they spake words of encouragement, to strengthen one another, that they might not be dismayed, that they might go on with boldness, in professing the name and truth of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding all opposition.

4. Again, Fourthly, When the Saints shall *Rest upon the promises of God, which seem to be far off*, this is part of their walking with God in an evil time: I say, then to act faith in the promises, which seem to be far off; when you see nothing but corruption nothing but darkness, yet even then to look to the promises of life, and holiness, and grace, which shall be given out, and shall be fulfilled: when there is little or no knowledge of God, then to close with the promise, that *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea*; so the promise that God hath made to roul away the reproach of his servants, when they meet with nothing but reproaches from men, then to look upon the promise, that he'll roul away their reproach, and cause their righteousness to break forth as the Sun at noon-day. That's another. Again,

5. Fifthly, When they shall *Vindicate the Providences of God*, though never so seemingly cross unto promises, and so clear all dispensations of God, both to the righteous and the wicked; and though he suffer the righteous to be trodden under-foot, yet they shall then vindicate God in his dispensations, and say, That the Lord is good and righteous, and just, and there's no iniquity in him; there's a time a coming when he shall clear up this truth, and they shall discern between the righteous and the wicked; there's a time a coming when it shall be said, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous*; there's a reward for the just of the earth: they shall vindicate the Providences of God in the face of the wicked, *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints to execute Judgement upon all*; there's a day of reckoning coming when the wicked shall pay for all; this he resolves on; and this is a second part of that service, *viz.* what it is to walk with God in evil times. But,

3. Third-

3. Thirdly, It's exceeding pleasing to God that his Servants (thus) should walk and stick close to him in evil times. I shall look no further than that of the Prophet *Malachi*, *Mal.* 4. 16. which we before spake of, *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and then a Book of remembrance is set before them, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name*; You may see the Lord is exceeding intent upon his servants that walk close with him in evil times, he doth eye them, and his ear is towards them, he listens to every word they speak, *They that feared the Lord spake often one to another*; and it's said there, *The Lord hearkened and heard:* the Lord hearkened: he did as if a man should listen to hear what his servants should say one unto another; they had other listners it's like in that evil time, the wicked hearkened and listned, that they might trap them; Ay, but God listens for another end, he hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before them. There's another particular, which doth declare how acceptable it is to God that they walk before him in evil times, a book of remembrance is set before them while they speak, God writes and takes notice of what they say, *A book of remembrance*, he writes a book of Chronicles that it may not be forgotten what they spake of God, and one to another: An allusion to the custom of Princes, that they had their books, in which they writ what any man did for them, what good service they had done for the State; as *Mordecai*'s good service was written in a Book, the King calls for the book in which the services of *Mordecai* were writ: so the Lord looks in his Book; a Book of remembrance was written. But again,

Fur-

Further, *A Book was written for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name*; nothing that they did for God, and spake of God, and thought of God, there's nothing shall be lost: it was an evil time; and it may be they durst not speak all their thoughts; yet, all their good thoughts were taken notice of by the Lord, they were not let go, but set down in his book, even their thoughts were written down: God will write them that they shall not be forgotten, Oh, *I remember the kindness of thy youth*, Jer. 2. 2. and *the love of thy espousal when thou followedst me in the Wilderness:* to follow God alone in a Wilderness, when there's little or no company, God takes this as a special respect and kindness.

But why does God take notice of his people in special, who walk most close with him in evil times?

1. First of all, I Answer briefly, It discovers that the very *Life of God and Christ* is in that soul, God rejoices in the Image of his Life, which he beholds in his Children: it's an argument that the Fish hath life when it swimms against the stream; the dead Fish, that's carried down the stream, it cannot make any resistance: It's an Argument the life of Christ is in that soul that is enabled to walk with God in evil times, to go against the stream of corruption and looseness.

2. Secondly, Again, As it is an Argument of *Life*, so it's an Argument of *Strength*; that soul hath got much strength from God, that walks thus with God in evil times: It requires much strength to swimm against the stream, a great stream; there are times of great opposition; the servants of God meet with much opposition from Satan and the World, then, then to walk with God when all the world almost goes contrary, to bear up with God then, doth discover the strength of the soul which God is exceedingly delighted with.

3. Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, Again, To walk with God in evil times, is an Argument of *Sincerity:* to do for God out of sincerity; *Job* was sincere, and still retained his Integrity, notwithstanding all the opposition that he met with; it doth discover that the soul hath a better principle; that soul that bears up with God in evil times, it hath a better principle than the men of the world; that he doth not walk by the Examples and Commands of men: it's not multitudes of men; this carries on false hearts, which oft fall in evil times; and therefore when God (notwithstanding general corruptions) carries on the hearts of Gods people to stick close to him, it's an Argument of much sincerity, and sincerity is that which God is exceedingly delighted in.

And therefore I shall conclude with a word or two of Application.

1. *Use.* First of all, It lets us see how contrary the wicked are to the righteous: It's not a good time will make the wicked man good, as it's not wicked time that will make the righteous man evil; it's neither the time, place nor company that can change the nature of the wicked man: *Saul* retains his evil heart when he is in the midst of the Prophets; though he be amongst the Prophets, and Propheſie amongst them, his heart is as evil as ever; but on the contrary, *David* retains a sweet enjoyment and breathings after God, when his soul was amongst the Heathen in the Tents of *Kedar*; the wicked man *will not learn righteousness in a Land of uprightness, let favour be shown to him:* though he be in a Land of uprightness, he will not learn righteousness; on the contrary, a gracious heart will not learn perverseness, though he be in a Land of wickedness: For why? there's the seed of God in them, the seed of God shall preserve them; and therefore, Oh what cause have wicked men to see

and

and bewail their condition! it's not time, place, nor company can make them better: in a Land of uprightneſs they'l be evil. Oh that the Lord would cauſe them to bewail their ſinful natures, and ſo come unto Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo he may make their crooked natures ſtraight. And let the Saints be thankful unto God, for that principle of God that is in them, Oh what cauſe have you to rejoice in it, and to be thankful for it, that God hath put ſuch a ſeed of himſelf into you! that he hath made you partakers of his own divine nature, which all the corruption that is in the world cannot alter! All the ſalt water that is in the Sea can't make the live Fiſh ſalt, ſtill it retains its freſhneſs; and all the wickedneſs that is in wicked men, can't make the gracious heart wicked. I ſay, improve this that is of God in you, take heed that you be not carried down with the ſtream of corrupt times; but know the worſe that the times are, ſo much the better ſhould you (that are the people of God) be; you are ſet up as Lights in the night, you are as the ſtars in the Firmament (ſo ſhall the righteous ſhine one day) and you (as the ſtars) ſhould ſhine brighteſt in the darkeſt night; God hath ſet you up for this very end, that ſo you may be as witneſſes in the world, that you may bear up his name in the world, that you may witneſs againſt the general corruption of the times, in which you live: God doth therefore ſet you up as Pillars of Braſs, on which he hath ſet his name, and his ſons name, and you are to bear it in the world; he hath ſet you to bear up his name, and he hath ſet you to bear up the earth, if it were not for the few that did walk with God in corrupt times, the earth would fall; remember then that God hath ſet you up for this very end; therefore don't ſuffer the name of God to fall through your looſe walking with God, and through your giving way to the evil of

the

the times; it's special service God hath for you to do, you are set here for this very end to bear up his name, it's the work, the service in your Generation; and therefore know that God calls for it at your hands, Oh know, he expects that you should embrace the truth of the times that are most opposed, persecuted and cast out, that you should practise the contrary graces unto the wickedness of the times, that you should strengthen and encourage one another in the way and work of the Lord, that you should rest upon the Promises, that seem to bear up and clear the Providences of God, against the blasphemies of the wicked, this God expects from you in evil times: and know, that if you don't walk closely with God it goes to his very heart, I say (you that are his people) it grieves the very heart of God when you go astray from him; saies Christ of the twelve Disciples in *Joh.* 6. 67. *Will ye also go away from me?* It's said, that there were many at that time that left Christ; well, he turns unto his Disciples, and saies to them, *Will ye also go away from me?* But *Peter* said, *To whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life*; What, will you? if you should go away, that would be a greater grief than all the rest; you that have walked with me so long, what, will you turn aside? It was the great commendation of *Judah* that she was faithful with God, and he bids her so continue; Oh let not *Judah* turn aside, in *Hos.* 4. 15. *Though Israel play the Harlot, yet let not Judah offend*: Though they play the Harlot, yet you that are my people, that have so long walked with me, and that have kept in my truth, Oh, have you a care, that you walk not with the multitude to do evil, and that you be not extravagant; it goes to the heart of God your Father, if you should walk loose and keep ill orders, this goes to the heart of God, it's more than if

twenty

twenty ſtrangers ſhould do it, if you in the leaſt ſhould turn aſide; this is a wound from a Child, and the wound of ſuch goes to the heart of the Father: But on the contrary, know that the Lord is exceedingly delighted with your cloſe walking with him; you heard before in *Mal.* 3.16. how God is delighted with the cloſe walking of the Saints, it's kindneſs that God will never forget, he will remember it to the laſt; in *Luk.* 22.28. (to name no more) ſaies Chriſt, You are they that have continued with me in my temptations, *Behold, I appoint unto you a Kingdom:* this was kindly taken: they did not only follow Chriſt, but they continued with him when under temptation, and when he was perſecuted, you that continued with me in my temptation and tribulation, *I appoint to you a Kingdom.* The Lord ſaies of you, that are followers of him in evil times, that bear up againſt the ſtream, Theſe are they that have continued with me faithful, and I'le not forget them, thou haſt kept to me in the hour of my patience, and I'le keep thee in the hour of temptation that is coming upon the World.

SER-

SERMON IV.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

I Have already dispatcht three Points, which were needful to be considered, before we come to the main; the last time, we considered what an evil time it was that *Enoch* lived in, the earth being so corrupt, as it appears (by that Prophecie of *Jude*) that the time of *Enoch* was an evil time: but notwithstanding the corruption of the time, *Enoch walked with God.* The Lord takes it exceeding kindly when his people walk close with him in evil times. But I shall further Consider what lies in the Text, *Enoch walked with God.* Here is nothing taken notice of but his *walking with God*; he was an excellent Propher, as the Apostle *Jude* doth witness, *Enoch the seventh from Adam Propheſied,* he was one that did a great deal for God, he preached faithfully unto the men of his Generation: but there's nothing said of him but this, *He walked with God*; he lived so long and he *walked with God.*

Obſer-

Observation. Observe then, *That it's the highest excellency of a Creature to walk with God:* For this is the greatest commendation that can be given of a man or woman, that they are such as *walk with God* in their Generation. Here I shall shew you, First, What it is to walk with God. And Secondly, That this is the excellency of any man or woman. And Thirdly, Wherein this excellency lies, which will make way for the Application.

Our first work is to Consider, *What it is to walk with God*; the way of a Christians walking with God, is either *Internal* or *External*; *Internal* is the way of his spirit, the way of his heart, which is hid from the world: *External* is the way of his Conversation. We shall now consider the former only.

What is this *Internal* way, the way of the spirit, the way of the heart in walking with God?

First of all, *Faith* is the beginning of this way, I say, *Faith in God and Christ*, and the *Promises* is the beginning of this way, for the Apostle saies, *We walk by Faith*, 2 Cor. 5. 7. And the Apostle to the *Hebrews* tells us expressly, That *Enoch walked with God by Faith*, Heb. 11. 5, 6. It's said, *By Faith Enoch was translated, and was not, yet before he was translated he pleased God:* where he holds forth to us, that *Enoch* lived and died in faith, and this was his first step, and this is the beginning of a Christians way in walking with God, he begins in Faith: 'Tis not possible that two should walk together unless they be agreed, so saies the Prophet *Amos*, *Amos* 3. 3. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* It's not possible till Faith close with Christ, there's no Agreement: it's faith that makes our reconciliation, and makes over this agreement to the soul, and therefore no walking with God before this agreement; it's not possible for

an

an Unbeliever to walk with God, Faith is the beginning of this way, for the soul is filled with slavish fear, and it dares not come to God, it dares not walk with him, it dares not come nigh him, till such time as faith doth discover the grace, love and bowels of compassion that are in the heart of God; it runs away from God, the creature runs from God as *Adam* did, God walked in the Garden, and he called for *Adam* to walk with him, but he durst not, the guilt of his transgression was upon him, and he hid himself among the Bushes in the Garden; Poor creatures! they run not only into the bushes of the Garden, but into the bushes of the Wilderness, they would hide themselves in the Thickets of their own righteousness, in Bryars and Thorns, rather than come in and submit to God again: There's not only pride of heart, but there's enmity, enmity against God, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*; he wishes there were no God, that he might still be without controul, and give no account of his actions, there's enmity in the heart, and this slavish fear and enmity remains till such time as God discovers it, and roots it out by faith, and faith discovers the tender bowels, love, and compassions that are in God towards it through Jesus Christ, so that as the soul goes on in believing, so it goes on in walking with God: A Christians Exercise of faith is the acting of faith, and exercising of faith every day on the promises, is a great part of his daily walking with God, for he that walks with God acts faith, in all conditions he runs to the Promise; when the guilt of sin revives, he runs to the Fountain set open for *Judah* and *Jerusalem* to wash in, and he rouls upon the Promise, *Lord, thou hast promised to blot out my transgressions like a thick Cloud*; and so when he wants holiness, when corruption prevails he runs to the promise, Lord, thou hast said, *sin*

shall not have Dominion over me; thou hast said, *If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, dead to sin*; and so in time of temptation he runs to the Promise, Lord thou hast said that such of thy servants as walk in darkness, and see no light, should trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God; and thou hast said, No temptation shall be a burden beyond their strength: And so in all streights and afflictions, it runs to the Promise, Lord thou hast said, That all things shall work together for good to them who love and fear thee. In a word, This is to walk with God; when the soul shall rest upon the Promise for all supplies both for this life, and that which is to come; when he shall trust the Lord for provision in the way, and trust him for an Inheritance in the end of the way, he shall say, Lord, thou hast given me the Word of thy grace, and I'le venture my soul upon it, though it be for eternity I'le venture upon thy Word, if I perish I perish; if God can deceive me, I am willing to be deceived. Thus doth faith put the soul into a capacity and posture of walking with God, it puts the soul in a posture of walking hand in hand with God, as a man with his friend, it puts the soul into the best posture of walking with God, and that is, into a posture of leaning and staying upon him as it walks with him. It's said that the Spouse, as she came out of the Wilderness, *She came leaning upon her Beloved*; The Lord knows, his poor servants are not able to walk with him in the Wilderness, unless they lean upon him, and they can't set one step forward unless they lean upon him, and therefore he hath given them himself, his son, and his sons name, his Word, to stay and lean upon in the Wilderness; and this is the beginning of all their walking with God. That's the first particular. Again,

2. Se-

2. Secondly, To walk with God is to *Bow the spirit unto God*; this is another part of the Internal walking with God; I say, when the spirit bows unto God, when the powers of the soul are over-powered by the Spirit of Christ to submit unto him, for the very powers of the soul are resigned up to Christ; when the soul gives him the chief place in the heart, and desires that God may be set up in the very excellencies of the spirit; it can't be content unless God have that strong hold, unless he gain the inward-most Tower and Castle, the very heart and spirit which he desires may bow to God; when it is not content to give him the service of the outward man, but desires to serve him in spirit also, and therefore does cry out of those inward lusts that defile the soul, and do hinder it from acting towards God: though others, though standers by look upon such a soul, and see that God hath done a great deal for it, yet he can't be satisfied so long as there are any risings in the inward man, any rebellious lusts in the heart that do rise up against God, it desires that the Word of the Lord may bring down every Towery imagination, and that it might lead every thought into Captivity unto Jesus Christ: when the soul makes it his work, thus to bow the spirit, the inward man unto Christ, to serve him in spirit, to give him the choice, the excellency of the affections, and the highest place in the soul, and is never quiet till every base lust be cast out of that inward Castle and Tower; this is another part of that Internal walking with God.

3. Thirdly, when the soul is *carried out with strong desires after the enjoyment of the presence of God*; when the soul delights in the presence of God, and is carried out with strong desires after further and further injoyment of God, this is a part of the souls walking

with him; when it can't take up in any thing short of God; Creatures and Ordinances can't satisfie, if it don't meet with God in them, and therefore it desires to use all creatures for that end that he may see God in them, and glorifie God for them, and be led unto God by them, that still he may come nearer unto God, whom to enjoy is his happiness; and so for Ordinances, he uses them all for that end that he may get nigher God, and enjoy more of the presence of God, and therefore he will wait upon the dispensation of the Word, because God hath promised to be there, and therefore he will walk with the Saints of God, because Christ hath promised to walk in the midst of the golden Candlesticks, for there he expects to meet him, and desires to enjoy much of God and Christ; I say, when the soul thus enjoies much of God, it's a great part of its walking with him; and therefore when God stands at a distance and hides his face, it goes up and down lamenting; Oh, this is the greatest perplexity in the world, for God to turn away and hide his face, and to lead him into a poor dark condition, Oh, Lord turn again, saies he, let me see thy face; though he chide him, better than not to see his face or hear his voice at all; and therefore its desires are vehement when God seems to exempt himself. Therefore *David* breaths after God, in *Psal.* 42. 1, 2. *As the Hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?* As the Hart breaths after the water brooks; Oh, it is a mighty desire that the poor, chased, hunted, bleeding Hart has after the water brooks, and such is *Davids* desire after God, *Oh when shall I come and appear before God?* It's also expresst in *Isa.* 26. 9. *My soul sought after God in the night season* (saies the Church

Church there) *with my spirit within me will I seek thee early*; it's a very Emphatical expression, *with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.* Well, this is another part, a third step of the souls walking with God.

4. Fourthly, Again, *When the soul is filled with mighty desires of being made like unto God*; his desires are continually extended this way, in being made like unto God; it looks upon it as his glory, as his happiness: It's the greatest part of the glory of heaven to be made like unto God, and therefore the Apostle cries out so much of the old man, and of the body of sin and death, and desires so much to be satisfied and filled with the likeness of God; he looks upon Christ for this end, and beholds the glory of God in Christ, and he looks wistly, and would alwaies be looking upon Christ, that so he might be changed from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord. His desires are mightily carried out, in being made like unto Christ, and he looks upon the promises for this end, that they may purge, sanctifie and cleanse from all pollution both of flesh and spirit; the spirit of God shining in them and through them, it might convey more of the divine nature to them: That's another part of his walking with God. Again,

5. Fifthly, *When the soul is desirous to embrace all the motions of the Spirit of Christ:* I say, it's desirous to embrace all the motions of the Spirit of Christ, and to walk up to them, and to improve them. Oh that sentence is writ upon the soul, *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit speaks*; and therefore the soul is attentive, and is intent upon God for this very end, That he may know the mind of God, and not lose its opportunity, that it may hear when the Spirit calls, and saies, *Come away:* There's

a great deal in this; this is that which conduces unto a Christians peace exceeding much: the knowing and improving such opportunities of Christs speaking in his heart, conduces to his peace and growth, and to his usefulness and serviceableness in those seasons and opportunities; when the Spirit of Christ (as I may say with holy reverence whispers in the soul, when the Spirit of Christ saies, Here's an opportunity of doing good to the soul, or to the body of a poor creature; Oh, how is then the heart drawn out amain to lay out himself for God, his strength for God, and to lay forth his Estate for God? And he saies as Christ said, *Lo I come:* Here's an opportunity for service; why, then, *Lo I come to do thy Will, O God*; the embracing, I say, and cherishing those motions of the Spirit of God, which he is pleased to hint in the souls of his people, is another part of their walking with him. Again,

6. Sixthly, In the next place, That soul walks with God *when it sees it self in the eye of God*; when it eyes God continually, and sees it self in the eye of God, in the presence of God, this is a main part of his walking with God; when a man shall do all that he doth as in the presence of God, every action, that though it concerns man and his outward calling, yet he desires to do all as in the presence of God: And therefore he doth not only look to a duty, but he looks to the manner of the performance of every duty, because the holy, pure and piercing eye of God is upon him; he looks to the manner, how it's carried on and forth, what spirit is in it, because he knows that the eye of God is piercing, it's a flame of fire, and he doth all as in the presence of God, and unto God, in his serving of man, he doth it as unto the Lord: he hath a higher end than the men in the world have, who know no

other

other end than to gain riches and honour, or the like; but there's a further and higher end, that he may lift up the name of God, and serve God in serving of man, that he may serve his Generation according to the Will of God; I say, when the soul is thus alwaies under the eye of God, and therefore is faithful whether man see or no, though there is no eye to witness, no eye to over-look, yet it knows that it's in the presence of God, for though he don't so see the transgression of his people as to cast them off, yet he may see that which may be matter of sore displeasure and grief, and therefore this is that which is as a bridle and a bit over all his waies, that it is in the presence of God. Again,

7. Seventhly, In the next place, The soul walks with God *when he is desirous to embrace every truth that God shall impart*; when it opens to truth; this is another part of the souls internal walking with God: when it opens to truth, to every truth which the embracing and professing of may cost him dear, being opposed in the world; it matters not, if you be perswaded it's the truth of Christ it's enough, it trusts God for the rest; oh it's greedy after truth; that soul that walks with God, oh how fearful is it, lest it should not embrace truth? Oh how fearful is it lest it should be left behind when God advances his truth in the world; and when truth is advanced, Oh, how fearful is it to be left behind? Though it would not set a step, until God goes before, and it would not hear the voice of a stranger, yet it would not be shut up from the voice of Christ, therefore it's fear is to be left behind, and desires that God would take it along: when he discovers truths unto a Saint, even the truth of the age, and the truth of the Generation in which he lives; that's another part of the souls walking with God. Again,

8. In the Eighth place, The Soul walks with God *when it can justifie the Word of God*; justifie the Word of God, though the Word condemn him in his practices, yet he will justifie the Word of God; though the Word be high, holy, and spiritual, and he sees he is a poor creature and can't come up to it, yet he won't despise nor hate the Word, but loves, justifies and blesses God for it; so the Apostle in *Rom.* 7. 12. *Wherefore the Law is holy*, saies he, *and the Commandment is holy, just and good.* Again in the 13 Verse, *Was then that which was good made death to me? God forbid. But sin that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good: that sin by the Commandment might become exceeding sinful.* And again in the 16 Verse, *If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the Law that it is good.* Though I do the things that I would not, yet, saies he, I love the Law and delight in it in the inward man; this is a main part of the spirits and souls walking with God, when it can thus justifie and clear the Word; and though the Word of the Lord cross him, yet it gets to the Word of the Lord, and though he can't come up to it, yet it blesses the Word, that's holy and good, though I be carnal, though I be sold under sin, it justifies the Word.

9. Again, In the Ninth place, *He will Justifie God*; that's another part of his walking, he will justifie God, and clear God in all his proceedings, though God go against his comforts, and smite them as he did *Job*, yet still he'll walk and go along with God, and clear and justifie God: *In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly, the Lord gives, and the Lord takes, and blessed be his name.* Still he will justifie God, though he can't see a reason of Gods proceedings, yet still he will justifie

ſtifie God; though he do him wrong, yet God is holy, righteous, and merciful; and this is another part of the ſouls internal walking with God. Again,

10. In the Tenth and laſt place, to name no more, The ſoul then walks with God, *When it is taken up with higher things than the things of this World.* It deſires to look up to higher things than the things of the world, and greater things than the world is able to preſent, and therefore would not have the world for its portion at no rate, he can't take up there, no, he hath higher things to fix his heart upon: the worldlings ſpend their time and meditations upon their Silver and Gold, upon their Houſes and Land, but a gracious heart will not ſpend many of his thoughts upon theſe, it will not ſpend the beſt of his thoughts upon theſe, but ſaies to his ſoul as *Solomon's* Mother ſaid to him, *Prov.* 31. 2. *Oh my ſon give not thy ſtrength to women*, &c. and ſo ſaies he, Oh my ſoul give not thy ſtrength to the things of this world, give not the ſtrength of thy heart and affections, to theſe poor low things, thou haſt better things to ſpend thy ſtrength upon, there's God and Chriſt, there's a Kingdom, there's the Pearl of great price, there's an Inheritance, there's an Eternity, there's an everlaſting enjoyment of God, theſe things art thou to be taken up with; theſe things doth he deſire to ſpend the beſt of his ſtrength and thoughts upon. You ſee my Brethren in part, what it is to walk with God, this is the internal way, the way of the ſpirit, the way of the heart in walking with God; this the Lord will have laid before you as your duty, and although you ſee you come infinitely ſhort of it (as all Chriſtians may ſee how they come ſhort of it) yet the Lord will have this truth diſcovered, and this way laid before us, though we come

in-

infinitely ſhort, and turn aſide in our walkings with God, yet be juſtifying of him, and vindicating of his Word, and ſay, Bleſſed be thy name and the word of thy grace which thou haſt made known unto us, and ſee that ye walk humbly wherein you come ſhort, and get out of your ſelves more unto Chriſt, that he may give you ſtrength to walk with him. So much for this time.

SER-

SERMON V.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

I Have handled divers Propositions, we are now come to the main, *It's the greatest commendation that can be given to a man or woman, that they are such as walk with God in their Generation:* it is the excellency of the creature upon earth to walk with God. I shall come to the Second Part,

And that is, the Christians *External* walking with God. To shew what is this external walking with God; It is either in its general or particular calling. Or he walks with God,

First, In those things that do more nearly concern *God himself.* And Secondly, He walks with God in the waies of his *Calling and Employment in the World.* And Thirdly, He walks with God in the *several Relations that God hath placed him in.* To speak to the first of these: And a Christian then walks with God,

1. First

1. First of all, When he walks by rule; this is the first step of his acceptable walking with God, I say, when he walks by rule: he knows that his heart is ready to go aside, to decline from truth and righteousness, and therefore he continually looks back for a rule to walk by, lest he turn aside; he knows that he is a creature, and his dependance is on God, and that the creature must walk by rule that the Creator gives forth, he knows that whatsoever is without rule, is an abomination unto the Lord, though it may seem never so good, never so specious to the eye, yet if there be not a rule for it, it's an abomination unto the Lord, and God saies, *Who hath required this at your hand*, as in *Hos.* 8. 14. For *Israel hath forgotten his maker, and builded Temples, and Judah hath multiplied fenced Cities, but I will send a Fire upon his Cities, and it shall devour the places thereof:* One would have thought this had been no forgetting of God, to *build Temples unto God*, and yet see how the spirit of God doth Interpret it, *Israel hath built Temples, and therefore hath forgotten his maker*; they did it in remembrance of God, but God bid him not do it, and therefore he had no rule, no command from God; nay, God commands that there should be but one Temple, and for them to multiply Temples for their own devotion, this was besides Gods rule, and therefore God did not approve of it. Now he that walks with God walks by rule, and he that walks by rule hath this only rule as that which is revealed in his Word, as the Sun when it shines upon the Dial, it directs a rule for you to walk by. There are corrupt rules; in times past ye walked according to the common course of the world; they walked by rule, but it was a wicked rule, not of Gods making; they walked according to the common course of the world; some men walk by the

Ex-

Example of others, they make that their rule, the example of the multitude, great men, and such as are counted wise, learned, judicious and prudent men, and the like, but this is a walking according to the course of the world; some make their own wills and lusts their rule, whatsoever seems good in their own eyes, a rule to walk by: but he that walks with God, walks by no other rule than the rule of the Word, and therefore he stands in the way and enquires: he enquires for the way, as God commanded the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 6. 16. saying, *Stand ye in the waies and sée, and ask for the old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls:* he bids them stand in the way, and enquire for the good old way, and he enquired at the mouth of God. So did *David*: in all his Enterprises he takes God along with him, in 2 *Sam.* 1. 1. *Shall I go up and fight against this people?* Shall I go up? he enquires of the Lord, his recourse is to God continually; Shall I go up or not? Lord shall I take such a course? Shall I take upon me such an Imployment? Shall I enter into such a relation? What is the mind of God? shall I go? or shall I not go up? And when the Will of God is cleared up to him, he rests satisfied, he cares for no more; he knows it's good to take God along with him, he would not go without God, nor take any thing in hand without God, and therefore he continually looks up to him for grace: That's the first part, or first step, he walks by rule. Again,

2. Secondly, No opposition, no difficulty in his way, no sad event can turn him aside from doing his duty; this is another part of the Character of him that walks with God; I say, when his duty is revealed to him, and made known by the Word, there's no difficulty, no discouragement can turn him aside, or cause him to de-

desist from that which is his duty: though he meet with discouragements from within and from without, even his own bowels rise up against him, the corruptions that are within him do oppose the work of the Lord in the performance of his duty; his unbelieving heart tells him, he had as good desist and give over, he shall never prevail nor do good on't, nor be a proficient in the way of God; notwithstanding his discouragements, he looks upon the strength of Christ and goes on. Sometimes the Devil sets upon him, temptation doth back corruption, and he meets with many a storm to blow him back again from following after God: but he looks to the promise and goes on, *The God of Peace shall tread down Satan shortly*; he looks to Jesus who was tempted, and is able to succour those that are tempted, and therefore still he goes on. Sometimes he meets with discouragements from the world, there are reproaches cast in the way, slanders cast in the way, Persecutions many times lie in the way; Ay, but still he goes on, and remembers that the Lord Jesus himself went through this way, and remembers that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must walk through this way, believes that there is a time when God will roul away all the reproaches of his servants, and therefore notwithstanding all opposition, goes on, not looking to the event; such a duty may cost him his liberty and life, but he looks whether it be his duty, and considers not the event, he will trust God for it: So did the three Children in *Dan.* 3. when the King threatens to cast them into the Fiery Furnace, the 15, 16, 17 Verses, say they, *Oh King we are not careful to answer thee in this matter, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us; however we will not worship thine Image:* he looks, I say, to his duty, that walks with God, and trusts him for the event; nay,

though

though friends be against him, which is very sad, sometimes by their perswasions, sometimes by their frowns and threatnings, it's a great temptation; Ay, but still he goes on: So did *Paul* in *Acts* 21. 13. you shall see there when they would have disswaded him from his duty, because of danger that was in his way; *Why,* (saies he there) *why, what do you mean to weep, and to break my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus:* What do you mean, to weep and break my heart? there's no sad event can discourage me from that which is revealed to me to be my duty; nay, God himself when he seems to break him, and to turn against him, to smite him in his body and estate and Children, though the hand of the Lord seems to be gone out against him, yet he will not desist from walking with God. *Psal.* 44. 17. see what they say there, *All this is come upon us, yet have not we forsaken thee, nor dealt falsely in thy Covenant*; and therefore he follows God in the Wilderness, when he is left destitute of all creature comforts; so did *Israel* in *Jer.* 2. 2. *I remember the kindness of thy youth, when thou didst follow me in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown*; *David* was still carried after God, though he was in a Land where no water is, *My soul breaths after thee, O Lord, in a dry and thirsty Land where no water is*; when God and the creature stand in competition, he falls on Gods side, and when he and the creature must part, he chooses to follow God, though he follows him naked, though naked of all outward comforts, yea, and God shall not have the less of him though he takes away all his comforts: he shall not have the less love, nor the less service, nor the less praise, though God strips him naked of all, this shall be no discouragement; and thus it was with *Job, Job* 1.

the

the latter end, when all was taken from him he blesses the name of the Lord, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord; in all this Job sinned not.* This is another part of his walking with God, there is no opposition, no discouragement that he meets withal, can turn him back to decline his duty. Again,

3. Thirdly, He that walks with God labours to do some singular thing for God, his desire is to hold forth much of him, much of God in his conversation, to do some singular thing for God: he knows that he hath set him in the world for this end, To bear up the name and honour of God in the world; that God hath poured his Spirit upon him for this end, that so in the light of God he might shine, and shine gloriously in a dark world, and therefore he desires to do something singular for God, because he hath done singular things for him; as thus, his desires, his endeavours are to promote the cause of God in the world, to help forward the service of his Generation, to be instrumental to the Lord (if the Lord please to employ him) for the helping forward of the great work in his Generation, wherein God hath cast him; he is willing also to lay down himself and his comforts, at the foot-stool of God, this is a singular thing, I say, to give up all to God whatsoever he hath; he is willing that the Lord should take him, his comforts, his gifts, his riches, and whatsoever he hath, and improve it for his own honour, that if the Lord should say it's mine, if God should call for it, if it shall be said the Lord has need of it, he resigns it, he is presently willing to let it go, though it be a comfort never so dear to him, he counts it an honour if God will take him and his, and whatsoever he is and hath, that God may improve him and his, for his honour; he desires to lie low before him,

even

even in the duſt. Yea, to follow Goſpel Precepts is another thing which is required, as to love enemies, this alſo he deſires to do; theſe are ſingular things, to pray for them that perſecute, to requite evil with good, to forgive wrongs and injuries, though thy brother offend ſeventy times ſeven in a day, yet if he comes and ſaies, it repents me that I have done thee wrong; theſe are Goſpel Precepts that are hard to fleſh and blood, but he that walks with God, deſires to follow him even in this command alſo; That's the third part of this character of him that walks with God.

4. Fourthly, He deſires to yield obedience unto every Commandment, I ſay, he deſires to yield obedience to every Commandment of the Lord, there's no jot, no tittle of the Word of the Lord but is precious to him, and therefore he hath no reſervation to himſelf: he doth not ſay, I'le do any other but this, I'le obey any Commandment but ſuch a Precept; I can't walk in ſuch a way with God, though it be cleared up to be a duty: but he that walks with God, yields Univerſal obedience, he will not indent with God, no reſervation to himſelf, no exemption from any Word or Law of God, he ſaies not as *Naaman*, *God be merciful to me in this*; no, he deſires to yield univerſal obedience, though he ſees he comes ſhort of his deſires, and his obedience is ſcant, ſo that he dares not rely upon his obedience, he dares not truſt to his obedience, to be juſtified by it, yet it is his deſire to come off in all things, and he hath no reſervation to himſelf, to ſay, if I embrace ſuch a truth, and walk in ſuch a way with God, it won't ſtand with my credit, I ſhall loſe my friends, my name, my eſteem in the world, my cuſtom or trade, and the like; I ſay, he that walks with God hath no ſuch reſervation; That's a fourth. Again,

5. Fifthly, He that walk with God will hold fast his profession, though all the world forsake him, though he be left alone, or though there be a very few that walk with him: so did *Elijah*, *Lord, they have killed thy Prophets*, said he, and *I am left alone, and they seek my life*, and yet *Elijah* did not forsake the truth, nor let go his profession, for he knows that there's a Promise that God will be with him; God hath promised to be with him, and the presence of God is instead of all creatures, and he shall have no cause to complain that he is alone so long as the Lord is with him: he also considers that there's a time when multitudes shall be given in to Christ, and therefore he is not discouraged, though there be but few for the present; he looks to the promise, and there he sees much cheerfulness, there is a promise that *they shall flow as Doves to the windows*; it's said that *a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one shall become a great Nation*; the Lord hath said there shall be thousands where there is but one, and a little flock shall become a multitude: the Lord hath spoken it, and he will hasten it in his time; and therefore though for the present he sees but few that walk with him whilst he walks with God, yet he is not discouraged. But again in the

6. Sixth place, He that walks with God is gracious and conscientious in his duty in private as well as publick; this is another part of his character, I say, he is kept in his duty in private as well as in publick; he dare not be remiss, though no eye see him, though there's none in the world to take notice of it, he knows he is in the eye of the Lord, and what he doth is unto the Lord, and therefore he doth it even with all his might. There are some in the world that make a fair shew before men, and in the mean time they care not what they are in secret: zealous before the world, *Jehu* like,

like, *Come and see my zeal*, but cold and remiss in secret: and so will give fair words before men, good words when there are witnesses, but when they are in secret and in private, in their Families, and the like, they care not what rage they go in, and how they play the Tyrants. But now he that walks with God is as careful of his duty in private as in publick: If it be his duty to give Alms, he'll give as much where there is no witness to take notice, as if there were a thousand eyes before him, as before God and his own soul; he dare not be remiss there, if remissness steal in upon him, it is his burden, and he is never satisfied till his soul be brought into such a frame, to be as conscientious of that duty which he owes to God in secret and private, as of those duties which the world takes notice of.

7. But again, Seventhly, He that walks with God is careful to use all means by which he may get nigher God, and to shun all occasions of sin which set the soul at a distance from God; I say, it desires to use all means that are of Gods appointment for getting nigher unto God; he will wait upon God in every Ordinance, and Administration of the Word, and seals, in reading and prayer, in communion and fellowship, he willingly neglects no duty, they are the Institutions of Jesus Christ, he looks upon them all as so many Conduit Pipes by which the Lord conveys himself unto his people: they are golden pipes through which the Lord pours abundance of golden oyl into the souls of those that wait for him; he looks upon the Promise that is annexed to them, that God has promised to be there and to make them blessings to his people, he therefore will wait upon God in them, though it may be for the present he don't find those In-comes of grace and strength which his soul longs after, though it may be

he can't (sometimes) reliſh the Ordinance and ta
ſweetneſs in it, yet ſtill he looks upon it as the Inſtit
tion of Jeſus Chriſt, and dares not turn his back on i
he'll rather accuſe himſelf, his own deadneſs, and u
believing heart, and ſtraitneſs, he will not accu
Chriſt and the Ordinance of emptineſs, for he know
Chriſt hath bleſſed it, and his people have found ſwee
neſs in it, it's the way in which Chriſt hath promiſe
to walk, and therefore he will go and lie in the way
he'll go and climb upon the Sycamore Tree, as *Za
cheus* did, he'll climb up on every ordinance, if at an
time he may ſee the face of God, if he may ſee Chriſ
paſſing by, for his ſatisfaction he uſes all means and Or
dinances that are of Chriſts Inſtitution, which may b
helps to him in his way to Chriſt, and ſhuns all occaſion
to ſin, all provocations unto luſt, he dare not meddle wit
ſin, no not with the leaſt ſin; he knows that ſin is a
moſt woful deceiver, if he have but the leaſt countenance
he ſoon winds himſelf into the ſoul, and it's hard to
wind him out when he hath got himſelf in: he knows
that there's a woful corrupt heart within, and that its
natural diſpoſition is like to dry Tinder, and is ready
to receive every ſpark of temptation that the Devil is
like to ſtrike in, and if a ſpark falls in, how ſoon it
ariſes to a flame, and how hard it is to quench it; and
therefore how doth he riſe againſt ſin, and the occaſions
of ſin! he is afraid of thoſe things which other men
count niceties and punctilio's, and the like, or they may
go under the colour of lawfulneſs; Ay, but he is fear-
ful of it, he knows that the leaſt ſin coſt blood, the
blood of the Son of God, and the guilt of the leaſt
tranſgreſſion can't be waſh'd away without the blood of
the Son of God, it will coſt blood to waſh away the
leaſt ſin as well as the greateſt, and therefore he dare
not be bold to meddle with the leaſt ſin, but he ſhuns

the

the very occasions and provocations unto sin: That's the seventh.

8. Eighthly, He approves of, and desires to walk in the strictest way: This is another part of his Character; he that walks with God approves of and desires to walk in the strictest way; he knows it's a great journey, and he had need take the straightest line, he is willing to engage himself in the strictest way; if any way hold forth more of God and Christ, if any way be more opposite to flesh and blood, if any way be a further ingagement to him to keep close to God, and bind up his heart that it may not so start aside, he is willing to walk with God even in that way, there he knows that that's the rule, *Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*; perfection is in his eye, and therefore he knows he can never be be too strict, too holy, walk too close with God, get too nigh God, nor do too much for God: this he laies down as a principle. Some measure of holiness, and of strictness many of the world will approve of, but to be so strict is to be too imprudent, in their account; but I say, he that walks with God, knows that his engagements are such as he can never do too much for God, when he hath done his utmost, if he could do ten thousand times more, he might say he is an unprofitable servant: That's the Eighth. But again,

9. Ninthly, He that walks with God will use no unlawful means to deliver himself: this is another part of his Character; he uses no unlawful means to free himself, though his liberty be at stake, though his life be at stake, he will not deliver himself by any unlawful course: thus it was with *Paul*, *Paul* might have delivered himself if he would have taken an unlawful course: in *Acts* 24. it's said there, that *Festus* did expect to have received money from him, in the latter end

of the Chapter, and if he would have given a Bribe, he might have been delivered; but he would not use such unlawful means for his deliverance, to open a door for such an escape, he would not give a Bribe to the corrupt Judge, I say, he would rather wait upon God for the opening a door that he may escape: in every estate and low condition he remembers, he that believes makes not too much haste, he remembers it's good not to make too much haste, he won't break Prison till God set him free, till God shall open a door for his escape, out of any afflicted or tempted condition that he is brought into. That's the Ninth.

10. In the tenth and last place, It is his desire to gain time, to redeem time from the world, and from his employments in the world, that he may converse more with God, and with his own heart: I say, it is his great desire, his care to redeem time from the world, that he may converse with God, and converse with his own heart, and therefore he is a good husband with time, he husbands his time well, that the great things of God may not be shut out; he knows that they are of great concernment, the things of God, and the things of the world to come are of greatest concernment, he is hastening to Eternity, here's no stay here, here he is upon the bridge and going over to another world, to Eternity, and therefore it concerns him above all to look after the things of that Eternity; he is alwaies best when he is with God, he hath found sweetness with God, he knows what it is to enjoy communion with God, and because he hath been with Christ upon the Mount, therefore he desires to go often thither, sets the world apart, that so he may converse with God, that he may behold the face of Jesus Christ: he knows how deceitful his own heart is, that he had need search continually, make a dili-

gent

gent ſearch; Oh, there's a depth of iniquity, a depth of deceit that can hardly be found out: Oh, it will harbour ſome luſt or other, if diligent ſearch be not made, it's to comply with an enemy, and to harbour ſuch an enemy that will ſeek the very deſtruction of the ſoul: I ſay, theſe things he hath known in part through grace of the great concernments and things of the world to come, and the ſweetneſs, preciouſneſs of that communion which the ſoul hath with Jeſus Chriſt, and therefore it is his daily care to husband his time as well as he may, that he may gain time from the world, and from the ſecular employments thereof; and this is the laſt Character that I ſhall name of him that walks with God: And ſo much ſhall ſerve for this time.

SERMON VI.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

I Have given you part of the Character of one that walks with God. Now I shall shew you what he is in his calling, in his ordinary employment that God hath set him in, for he walks with God in his calling, as well as in those duties that do more immediately concern God.

1. And first of all, He looks upon his Calling that God hath set him in as an Ordinance of God: I say, he looks upon it as an Ordinance of God, and therefore he submits unto it, and endeavours to be faithful in it: He knows it's laid upon all men, in *Gen.* 3. 19. *In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread*; there are some bad drones that fortifie themselves against this Scripture, and say, this is only the Curse, *In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread:* but now the Curse is taken away by Christ for his people, and therefore they ought to work no longer; as *the Lilies in the Field, they neither sow nor reap, but yet are cloathed:* but now he that walks with God looks upon that Scripture not only as a Curse, but as a Com-

a Commandment, *In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread*; it's the Commandment of God, and the Commandment holds though the Curse be taken away: Man was enjoyned to labour in the state of Innocency, when there was no Curse; God made him, and it's said, he put him into the Garden to *dress it*: yea the very Angels, *Heb.* 1.14. *Are they not all ministring spirits sent forth for the good of his Saints?* They all work, they have all their employment, there's not one Angel in Heaven that is idle; God himself is a pure Actor, he is an active Spirit, he is alwaies working, so saies our Saviour, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*: though he ceased from the works of Creation, yet God hath been working ever since, he worketh hitherto every day, and I work: So that he that walks with God looks upon his Calling as an Ordinance of God, and sees the wisdom and goodness of God in it, in appointing such a way for man, there's abundance of wisdom in it; by this means wicked men are kept from being desperately wicked; if there were no work, no employment for them, there would be a studying of wickedness, a plotting and contriving of wickedness, sin would become out of measure sinful, it would break from all banks and bounds, the whole earth would commit violence; nay, it's good for Gods own people, whilst they are in the world, to have employment, for by this means they are kept from many a snare, and many a temptation they are freed from: an idle man tempts the Devil; the Devil tempts man, and an idle man tempts the Devil unto those woful snares which others (being employed) are freed from; a man that walks with God looks upon his Calling God hath let him in, as an Ordinance of God. But then again,

2. Secondly, He desires to do all the works of his Calling

Calling as unto God: that's another part of his walking with God in his Calling; he desires to do all the works of his Calling as unto the Lord: he knows that he hath to do with God, yea even then when he is serving of man, that he hath not only to do with God in the things of his worship, not only when he comes before God in Ordinances, and in duties, when he reads and when he prays, and when he hears; most men confess then they have to do with God; but he that walks with God knows he hath to do with God, when he is in his Calling, and therefore he takes that Counsel which is given him by the Apostle, in 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. *And they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of the world passes away:* He uses the world as if he used it not, because he knows he hath to do with God in the things of the world. Now he hath to do for God, and doth all for the Lord,

First, As he sees there's a trust committed to him from God, and this is an engagement to faithfulness; his Calling is a Talent, it's one of the Talents that God hath given him, and therefore it's a trust that lies upon him, and therefore this is an engagement to faithfulness; yea, and he looks upon himself as one that is to be accountable to God how he hath carried himself, not only in the waies of Gods worship, but how he hath carried himself in his Calling, with what faithfulness he hath performed the works of it; thus he eyes God in it, and he doth it as unto the Lord, as he makes God the great end of all that he doth; thus he performs the work of his Calling, as in it he makes God the great and last end. It's true, there are other subordinate ends which he looks at, and he may, even when he is industrious in his Calling, as to gain a comfortable subsistance for himself and his family, and that he may give to others as need be, and the like, but the main

nd

end is for the glory of God, that God may serve himself of him, that God may improve him, and that he may be an Instrument of much good in his place and Generation; and truly where men don't propound this, and make God the great end, there must needs be woful miscarriages in all that they take in hand; when men know no other end but to gain the world and heap up riches, and to build their Nests on high, and the like; when this is the only end that they propound in the work of their Calling, it's the way to all injustice, violence, fraud and deceit, and forgetfulness of God, and a whole flood of iniquity comes in: but he that walks with God, his aim is that God may have glory, and that he may be the great and last end, and therefore though he doth not gain much in the obtaining of those subordinate ends, yet he is faithful in his Calling, he goes on in obedience to Gods command, and to be faithful to his Generation. That's a second particular, he that walks with God in his Calling, doth all as unto the Lord, he is the last end he looks at.

3. But again, Thirdly, He desires to be holy and spiritually minded whilst he is in his outward employment; that's another part of his walking with God; he desires to be holy in the midst of the world, and therefore it is that he takes that Counsel that the Apostle gives in 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. *To use the world as not abusing it, because the time is short, and the fashion of the world passeth away*; he bewails nothing more than a carnal heart whilst he is in the world, it's death to him, it's worse than death: *To be spiritually minded is life and peace, but to be carnally minded is death*; therefore he looks upon that Scripture with joy, that doth propheſie of holiness, abundance of holiness that shall be given out in that day, in *Zach.* 14. 20. *In that day there shall be holiness unto the Lord upon the Bells*

of

of Horſes: he looks upon that Scripture, and his heart doth cloſe with it as a gracious promiſe; he prays for the accompliſhment of it, his heart leaps within him to think that there is a time coming when there ſhall be holineſs to the Lord in the converſations of all his people in their employments: that though their hands be put to the things of the world, yet their hearts ſhall be up, their hearts ſhall be breathing after God, the heart ſhall be converſing with Chriſt; he knows that his Calling was made for him, and not he for his Calling, it was made to be ſubſervient to his beſt good, to be a ſervant to him, not to be his Maſter, and therefore ſtill he deſires to keep his heart free for God; he knows that if he make a God of the world, the world will make a ſlave of him, and therefore he deſires to walk as one that Chriſt hath made free, and ſtill his heart is breathing and thirſting after God, whilſt he is in the midſt of worldly Employments. That's a Third.

4. Again, Fourthly, He that walks with God in his Calling, is careful to ſanctifie all by the Word and Prayer, ſo ſaies the Apoſtle in 1 *Tim.* 4. 5. *All things are ſanctified by the Word of God and Prayer:* he knows that there's a Curſe upon the whole Creation, ſin hath brought a curſe upon every creature, there's a curſe upon every way of man, there's a curſe and a ſnare in every Calling, in every Employment that man ſets his hand unto, and therefore it is his deſire that all may be ſanctified unto him; he knows that the creature is not comfortable, no condition comfortable, unleſs God be kept cloſe to the creature, and therefore he looks up continually to God for his bleſſing, that all may be ſanctified to him; he knows that the earth can bring forth nothing but Bryars and Thorns, it's the curſe of the world, and ſo it's the curſe of every condition,

dition, that though he plough and sow, and though he labour with never so much industry, his Calling brings forth nothing but Bryars and Thorns, he meets with nothing but vanity and vexation, crosses and molestations, and that which is worst of all, he is not able to bear them, therefore he desires that all may be sanctified unto him by Word and Prayer; he knows that it's not the industry of man that makes rich, it's not the blessing of the hand unless the Word of God goes along with it: in all his waies to take God along, that so he may have the blessing of the Lord upon the works and labours of his hand. That's a fourth. Again,

5. Fifthly, He is careful that the world and his outward employments don't justle out the things of God: This is another part of his walking with God in his Calling; he knows the things of God are of greatest concernment: his Calling and the things of this world re but for a time, for this moment, whilst he is travelling over the bridge to Eternity, and therefore he knows he shall wrong his own soul, if the cares of the world, and the things of the world, and over-eager pursuit after the world, should hinder him in his pursuit after God and Christ: He looks upon that as good counsel which Christ gives in *Matth.* 5. saies he there, *Seek the Kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof in the first place, and all things shall be added:* Let the things of God have the preheminence, he gives them the precedency in his heart and affections, in his practice and pursuit, still the Kingdom of God and the righteousness of it is sought in the first place: therefore he desires to set up God above the world, and saies, Lord, sit thou here, sit thou here in the highest place, sit thou in my heart, in the excellency of my spirit, let the things of God have the precedency; and as for the world, Thou world sit thou at my foot-stool;

he

he saies to the world as *Abraham* said to his Servants, in *Gen.* 22. 5. when he went to sacrifice his son *Isaac*, he saies to the young men, *Stand you here, and I and the Lad will go up to the Mount and worship:* and thus saies the heart to the world, World stand thou here, Calling, Employment, stand thou here till I go up yonder and worthip, till I go and converse with God, and behold the face of Christ, stay thou here in the Valley till I go up to the Mount and worship: for he gives the things of God and Christ the precedency, because he knows they abide for ever, the Word of the Lord that abides for ever, and so the love of God and Christ abide for ever, and communion with God and Christ endures for ever, the Image of Christ upon his soul endures for ever, he therefore gives these the precedency in his affections, and in his pursuit; therefore it is, that he is not willing to grasp too much of the world, he is fearful to grasp too much of the world, to have more of the world than he knows how to manage with the performance of his duty to God, he is fearful, I say, that the world should justle out his betters, and therefore will not grasp too much of the world, and is careful so to order the things of the world, as that he may gain time to seek after the great things of God and Christ. That's a Fifth particular. Again,

6. Sixthly, He that walks with God in his Calling lives by Faith: he lives by faith whilst he works in his Calling; he doth not only live by faith for the things of heaven, he doth not only exercise faith, for the blessings of the world to come, but he lives by faith in his Calling, and therefore he goes on chearfully, he knows his person and his works are accepted, whatsover his work is though never so mean it's accepted, and all his labours, and faithfulness in his Calling are accepted:

he

he exerciſes his faith for the covering of his infirmities, he knows that he is ſubject to diſhonour God continually, there's much weakneſs doth eſcape from him whilſt he is in the world, and therefore he exerciſes his faith for the covering of thoſe infirmities; he lives by faith for the protection of God in his Calling, thus he lives by faith: he knows there's a promiſe, and he lives upon it, *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy waies, that thou daſh not thy foot againſt a ſtone:* In all thy waies, in every good and lawful way in thy Calling there is a promiſe of protection, and he lives by faith upon this promiſe: And there is a promiſe of bleſſing alſo, *Bleſſed art thou coming in, and bleſſed art thou going out*, and he exerciſes faith in that promiſe alſo. That's another part of his walking with God. But again,

7. Seventhly, He is careful to avoid thoſe ſtumbling blocks and ſnares that might endanger him in his walking with God; that's another part of his walking with God: It's commendable for men to be induſtrious in their Calling, but how many ſtumbling-blocks on the right-hand and on the left, that men daſh againſt, and ſo loſe all their induſtry and diligence by daſhing againſt thoſe ſtumbling blocks! One ſtumbles at ſelf-end, ſelf-ſeeking, he propounds himſelf only, and his own good, and therefore he loſes all; others meet with other ſnares and fall into them, deceit, cozenage and falſhood; ſome are over-eager in their purſuit after the world; and others ſtumble at the ſtone of Slothfulneſs and Idleneſs; it's hard to walk in a middle way; but he that walks with God knows that there's a ſnare in every condition, and therefore he is watchful againſt thoſe ſnares: Every Calling, every Employment hath ſome ſpecial ſnares and ſtumbling-blocks; men that are employed about high things,

great

great matters, they meet with one kind of snare, men in low conditions meet with another kind of snare, every high condition, and every low condition hath its snares, and therefore he is careful to observe what estate, and what the calling and conditionin that estate that he is in doth most expose him unto, and he is careful in watching against those snares therein.

8. Eighthly, Again, In the last place, He abides with God in his Calling; that's another part of those that walk with God, he abides with God in his Calling: the Apostle gives that counsel in 1 *Cor.* 7. about the 15, or 16 Verses, *That every one should abide in the Calling that God hath set them in:* and this counsel he labours to walk up unto, he is content in the place God hath set him, or submits unto it with contentation, and therefore he abides in the way that God hath set him in. The Apostle doth not mean, that it is not lawful for a man to change his Calling, for certainly that may be done upon occasion; the Merchant may turn Husbandman, or the Husbandman may turn Merchant, if he sees occasion for it: but God would have his people to abide in their Callings, not rashly to change them, but to see God in them, and submit thereunto with content. Thus you see what that man is that walks with God; if you follow him in his ordinary works and employments, you shall find him such in the waies of his Calling, and therefore oh that you would look up to the Lord to make this truth practical to you. Truly these are high lessons, but they are such as every gracious heart is breathing after, and following hard unto, and bewails wherein it comes short; I say, this is or should be found in every gracious heart, therefore look unto God that he may make you such whilst you walk in your Callings. Oh it were a blessed time Brethren if all your hearts were brought up to this, thus

to

to walk with God (as you have heard) in your Callings, we should soon see the new heavens that is spoken of, God hath promised to create new heavens and new earth, if mens hearts were once set to walk thus with God in his waies, and in their employments, we should soon see new earth, men must be new, new hearts, new conversations, first new men and then a new world, look up to the Lord to make you thus faithful in your Callings; it's the main thing that God looks after, faithfulnes; walking with him whilst we are performing the works of our Calling; it's not so much the Calling that God regards, but your faithfulnes in it let the Calling be what it will: if a man have a Calling never so honourable, yet if he be not faithful in it, he is no way pleasing to God; and on the other side, if a man have a Calling never so mean, and never so low, yet if he be faithful in it, it's well pleasing to God: oh it's that which will stick by you, yea, it's that which will follow you when you leave the world; your Callings can't follow you, they must leave you, they must be left behind below, but thy faithfulnes, that faithfulnes that hath been exercised in thy employment, and in thy work, that will never leave thy soul, that will follow it even unto heaven: and now you that fear the Lord, though others be unfaithful, yet you are engaged to faithfulnes, you are ingaged to walk with God in the works of your Calling, for you have the promise of protection, you have the promise of blessing, this is ingagement to you, you have a promise that the Lord will be with you, that his Angels shall be with you, that they shall keep you continually when you are in your way, and in the works of your Calling, and therefore this is an engagement unto you, and you have the promise of blessing: the Lord if he bless you in your way, what an engagement is this unto you to be faithful! he will not only be with

you when you are in those duties that do more nearly concern his worship, but he hath promised to be with you by his protection, and by his blessing even whilst you are in the works of your Calling, and therefore walk up to God there in your Calling; it's a Talent left to you by God, and it doth engage an ingenious man to be faithful, therein you are betrusted, and herein an instrument to do good to souls and bodies, and therefore you are engaged herein as it is your duty; therefore be faithful in all; Oh what encouragement is here, for Christians to consider this, whatsoever their Calling is, though never so mean, they are accepted in it, the Lord accepts it, while they study faithfulness to carry it faithfully in a mans Calling, in the meanest work that ever they took in hand they are accepted, as if their work were the most honourable work in the world, and therefore if you have acceptance, not only when you come before God in his worship, but when you are in your own waies, in your Callings and Employments your person and works are accepted, it's a great engagement unto you to be found faithful in the works of your Calling. And so much for this time.

SER-

SERMON VII.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him.

I Have given you part of the Character of one that walked with God, and shewed you what he is in those duties that do more immediately concern God himself: I shewed you (the last time I spake) what his carriage is in his Calling, in his ordinary employment: he looks upon his Calling as an Ordinance of God. God who is an active Spirit can't endure that any of his creatures should be idle; the very Angels have their employment, there's never an Angel in heaven idle; *Are they not all ministring spirits*, saies the Apostle in *Heb.* 1. they *are all ministring spirits, sent forth for the good of them that shall be saved:* And therefore out of this Consideration he submits unto the way of his Calling, and desires to be faithful in it; he also desires to do all that he doth to the Lord, even the very works of his calling he doth them to the Lord; he looks upon it as a trust from God, and by that trust he is engaged to faithfulness; and he desires to make God his last end: there's a fur-

ther end, besides the gain of riches and living in the world, there's a further end which he eyes, which is more honourable, more noble, and that is to serve God in his Generation, that he may be an instrument in the hand of God to do some good in his Generation, that God may have the glory of it; this is the last end, and so he doth all as to the Lord: he desires also to be holy and spiritual in the midst of his Calling, though his hand be to the earth, he desires that his heart may be upright, he groans under the burden of a carnal heart, it's worse than death to him to be carnally minded: he rejoices in the promise of holiness, and in that Prophecie in *Zachariah*, *In that day holiness shall be written to the Lord upon the Bells of Horses*; there's a promise that Gods people shall be holy when they are in the world, in the midst of their Callings and Employments, holiness shall be written to the Lord upon them; he rejoices to think that that time is a coming, he prays and waits to see the accomplishment of it in his own spirit: he desires to sanctifie all by the Word and Prayer; he knows it's the blessing of the Lord, and not his own endeavours that can make him prosperous in his Calling; he desires also that the things of the world don't shut out the things of God; that's another part of his walking with God Oh how fearful is he to grasp too much of the world, how fearful is he that the things of the world should deprive him of those opportunities of waiting upon God, of communion with the Lord, and with his own spirit! He doth not live upon his own endeavours, but he lives by faith, whilst he works with his hand; he exercises faith in the promise for protection, blessing and acceptance. He desires also to shun all those snares and temptations that are in the way of his Calling; as every Calling hath its special snare and temptation, he desires there

to

to be most watchful where there is most likelihood he should slip and fall, and be snared and broken; he prays and watches against the temptations that are in his way, and is willing to abide with God in his Calling. I shall now come to shew you what this person is in his *Relations:* One that walks with God you shall find active, gracious, carry it graciously in his *Relations:* And I shall only speak now of Family Relations, and there's some need we should speak of that: It seems to be hinted in the Text, That *Enoch* was faithful with God in his Family; and this was mentioned, That *Enoch* walked with God after he begat *Methusalem* three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters; and as he begat them so he brought them up to God, and was found faithful in his family Relations. There are three sorts, there's that of Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, and Servant and Master: I shall not speak largely of all these, it would be too large a Subject. I shall only now give you some hints what that gracious person is that walks with God as *Enoch* did, and how he carries it in those several *Relations.*

To begin with the Relation of the *Wife* and *Husband*; hath God set such a person in the Relation of a Wife; you shall behold her gracious carriage.

First of all, She looks upon her Husband as her head, and submits unto him as one that is set over her in the Lord; she knows that there is a priority and a dignity that God hath put upon her husband: the man was first, and then the woman, and therefore she submits unto him in all lawful things, though in some respects he may seem to be inferiour to her, though she brought more wealth, though her birth be more honourable, though her parts be more ripe, yet she submits unto him, as one that God hath set over her; nay,

though he may seem unworthy to rule, and unworthy of the dignity, yet she submits for the Lords sake, because it is the Ordinance and Command of God. There are divers things in this submission which are seen in a gracious woman that walks with God. As,

1. First, She thinks and speaks honourably of her Husband, and speaks honourably unto him: you know what was *Mary*'s carriage to *Joseph*, though she might seem to be above him, she saies, *Thy Father and I have sought thee:* She doth not say, My Father and I, but *Thy Father and I have sought thee*; and so the Apostle *Peter* speaks graciously of such gracious women that speak honourably to their Husbands, in 1 *Pet.* 3. 6 he doth exhort women to imitate *Sarah*, *Sarah obeyed her husband, and called him Lord.*

Again, As she speaks honourably to him, and of him, so she labours to please him in all lawful things, to conform her self as much as may be unto her husbands disposition, to win him with her love and gracious carriage; she also receives his counsels, and is willing to submit to his reproofs in all things lawful, because she looks upon him as one that the Lord hath set over her to be head Again,

2. Secondly, She looks upon her self as one that the Lord hath given unto her, that she might be a meet help unto him; this is another part of the gracious carriage in a woman; she looks upon her self as one that is given to be a meet help unto her husband, and therefore she desires to do him good all his daies: so saies *Solomon* when he speaks of this vertuous woman, in *Prov.* 21. 12. *She will do him good and not evil all the daies of his life*; she endeavours to help him, and to do him good in his soul, body and estate, she'll do him good in every condition, in affliction, in low conditions when the hand of the Lord is upon him, if the hand

hand of the Lord be ſtretched out againſt his eſtate, and bring him low, ſhe ſubmits unto it, and will not upbraid but comfort him, and be content to take part with him in his affliction and low condition, and all this ſhe doth as unto the Lord, becauſe of the Ordinance of the Lord; and thus you ſee how ſuch a perſon as walks with God carries it in the Relation of a wife. Well, if God ſet ſuch a perſon in the relation of a Husband, you ſhall find him alſo walking with God in that relation: he loves his wife dearly, and he loves her eſpecially for that of God he ſees in her; though he dare not love the creature immediately, nor rejoice nor delight in the creature, becauſe he knows that's Idolatry, yet he loves that which he ſees of God in her, and under God, he loves her next to God with the deareſt love: That, that is the moſt near relation, it's nearer than the Relation of Father and Mother, Sons and Daughters; this is not only a natural but ſupernatural relation, it is a Myſtical relation, and there's a great deal of God in making two to become one, and therefore, I ſay, of that love which is due to, and which he may give unto the creature, he gives unto her the greateſt ſhare, as being the neareſt relation: and becauſe he loves her, you ſhall ſee how he carries himſelf towards her.

1. Firſt, He loves her ſoul in the firſt place, and therefore it is that he moſtly deſires to do her good in her ſpirit: therefore it is that he inſtructs and prays with her, and for her, that ſo the Lord may do her good in the inward man: his deareſt love is toward her beſt part, and therefore he rejoices moſt in that when he ſees the work of God upon her heart: when they can live together as heirs, co-heirs of the grace of life, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, that is it that he takes the moſt contentment in. Again,

2. Secondly, Alſo becauſe he loves her, he won't be bitter to her, he will remember that rule in *Col.* 3. 19. *Husbands love your Wives and be not bitter againſt them:* he will not be bitter in word nor action; he conſiders her weakneſs, looks upon her as the weaker veſſel, and therefore he will not break her; if he muſt chide and fight, it ſhall be with himſelf, and with thoſe luſts that are within him and war againſt his ſoul, and not with that relation that the Lord hath given to be ſuch a wife and ſuch a comfort unto him in this his Pilgrimage.

3. Again, Becauſe he loves her, he will defend her; this is another part of his gracious carriage; he will be a veil for a covering to her: ſo *Abimelech* told *Sarah*, *Lo, thy husband is a covering to thee where ever thou goeſt:* he will right her cauſe againſt all wrongs and injuries in a lawful way, ſo far as he is able,

4. Again, He covers her weakneſſes; that's another part of his carriage; he remembers that rule that is given unto husbands, *Husbands love your Wives*, in *Epheſ.* 5. 25. *as Chriſt loved his Church*; Why, Chriſt covered the infirmities of the Church: though there be a great deal amiſs, yet he puts his raiment upon her; when ever he preſents his people unto his Father, he preſents them as if there were no ſpot in them, as if they were holy and perfect, *Thou art all fair my love*, ſaies he, *and there is no ſpot in thee:* Why, ſo this man that walks with God won't blaze abroad the infirmities of his Wife, but is willing to cover them, for he knows what the Lord Jeſus hath covered in reſpect to him.

5. Again, Fifthly, Becauſe he loves her he will maintain her, that ſhe may want no conveniencies according to his rank, and the condition that God hath ſet him in: he won't keep her ſhort of neceſſaries,

but

but provide both for her neceſſity and dignity; he won't ſpend all her portion, and then turn her out of doors to provide for her ſelf: he won't keep her ſhort, that ſhe ſhall have no opportunity to do good, but he gives her allowance to ſhare with him, and to take comfort together of that which God hath given him.

6. Again, Sixthly and laſtly, He will maintain her honour in the Family, and therefore he commands that ſhe be reſpected: he will not ſuffer ſervants nor children to uſurp authority over her, but commands that reverence be ſhewed, and ſubmiſſion given to her over all the Family; he looks upon her as one that God hath ſet (next himſelf) to be the next light of the Family, and therefore deſires that ſhe might ſhare and be reſpected; he knows that God hath given her to be a help, and (ſo under him) to look to the waies of her Family, Children and Maidens, and therefore in this he doth countenance her, leſt the Family be diſordered, and God be diſhonoured in it, this he doth as unto the Lord and for his ſake (though there may be unworthineſs on her part) becauſe it's the Ordinance and appointment of God: Thus you ſee what is the work of the firſt Relation of Husband and Wife.

2. But Secondly, The ſecond Relation in the Family is of Children and Parents: Now if a gracious heart, as one that walks with God, be ſuch in either of theſe relations, you ſhall ſee his gracious carriage.

1. Firſt, to ſpeak in relation to Children: If God hath ſet him as a Child, he deſires to obey his Parents in all things in the Lord; he deſires to give willing ſubmiſſion and obedience unto them, ay, and that from the very heart, he obeys them as Chriſt obeyed his Father, in *Pſal.* 40. 7, 8. *Lo, I come to do thy Will, I delight to do thy Will, O God, thy Law is in my heart*; and

and this is the carriage of a gracious Child, one that walks with God, to his Parents, he obeys them from the heart.

2. Secondly, He also submits unto all their Instructions, he embraces the wholsom counsel of his Parents, *He will not despise the counsel of his Father, nor depart from the Law of his Mother, but he wears them as an Ornament of Grace to his head, and as a Chain,* as *Solomon* speaks.

3. He also doth submit unto all their reproofs and chastenings, because he looks upon them as the reproofs and chastenings of a Father, and so proceed from love, and they are for his good. He also

4. In the fourth place, Is content that they should dispose of him for Calling, for Employment: he is willing that they should dispose of him in Marriage, he knows that they have a great share of him, and therefore he will not dispose of himself without their consent. He also in

5. The Fifth and last place, Looks upon himself as alwaies bound, even all his daies, to love and honour, and to respect his Parents; though God hath given him a Family of his own, and though he be set free from their Government, yet he looks upon himself all his daies bound to honour and respect them, and to maintain them, if the hand of the Lord be upon them to shorten their comforts, and if his be lengthened out, he looks upon himself as bound to relieve their wants, and to be a comfort and stay unto them in their old age: this is the carriage of one that walks with God, if he be found in the relation of a Child. But for the relation of a Father.

If he stand in the relation of a Parent, you shall also see his gracious carriage:

1. First

1. First of all, He looks upon his Children as given him of God, to be brought up for God; he knows that they are but only sent out to Nurse (as it were) to him: God hath given him such and such Children to train up in his fear, and therefore it is his great desire to see the Image of God upon them; he is more desirous that they should be made rich in grace than in gold, therefore he prays for them, counsels them, instructs them, gives them good examples, and all that so the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ may be communicated unto them; if the Lord have pleased (at any time) to work upon the hearts of his Children, Oh how thankful is he unto the Lord for it! And he rejoices a thousand times more, even in this, that he knows that they are the Lords, than that they are his.

2. Secondly, Again, He will not bear with that which is evil in them, though they be never so nigh to him, though they be of his flesh, yet he will not bear with that which is a dishonour to God: he will not suffer that in a Child which he abhors in another, which he will reprove, nay (it may be) punish in a servant: but he is impartial in the matters of God, when Gods honour is concerned in it, he won't connive at any wickedness in them.

3. Thirdly, And on the other side, He is careful not to provoke them to wrath; for that's another extreme; he remembers that that is a Precept, *Fathers, provoke not your Children to wrath, but bring them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord*; he desires rather, if it be possible, to rule them by love than by fear, he knows that slavish fear is the seed of a great deal of evil, and many times it destroies Ingenuity it self; he won't provoke them by cutting words, as *Saul* did his son *Jonathan*, in the first of *Samuel*, you shall see what

what cutting words he gave to *Jonathan*, a good and gracious ſon, 1 *Sam.* 20. 30. *Then Sauls anger was kindled againſt Jonathan, and he ſaid unto him, Thou ſon of the perverſe rebellious woman*, &c.

4. Fourthly, He will not deny them conveniencies, and that education that is fit for them, but he is careful to diſpoſe of them in the way of a lawful Calling, he ſets them in a good way that they may be ſerviceable to the Lord and their Generation, according to the Will of the Lord, when he is dead and gone.

5 Fiftly, He won't fall upon them with violence before he knows the matter and examines the cauſe, leſt he ſhould ſmite them without cauſe; he will not caſt them off for every offence, but he ſeeks the Lord for them, and waits long for their return: he prays and prays again that the Lord would bring them home unto himſelf; and if at any time the Lord gives repentance, he looks upon it as a great mercy, and his heart is drawn forth in thankfulneſs; and this is the carriage of one that walks with God in the relation of a Parent.

There is a third relation in which I ſhall be more ſhort, and that is, That of Servant and Maſter. Now if God ſet a gracious ſoul in this relation, ye ſhall ſee his carriage.

1. Firſt of all, If he be a Servant, he is content with his condition, he remembers that the Lord Jeſus himſelf was found in the form of a Servant, and therefore well may he, a poor worm, ſubmit unto that condition if the Lord ſet him in it, he remembers he is accepted of God in that condition: it is not the work and employment that God looks at, but the faithfulneſs, the faithful carriage of the heart and ſpirit, and the work, though it be never ſo mean, and never ſuch drudgery, if done to the Lord in faithfulneſs, God accepts of it; and

thus

thus he is Christs freeborn of the freewoman, free in the inward man, and doth more willingly and contentedly submit himself unto the condition of a Servant, if the Lord be pleased to place him in it.

2. Secondly, Again, As he is a Servant, he yields all due honour, respect and obedience unto his Master, or to such as God hath set over him; he yields obedience in all things in the Lord: He is also careful of the good name and estate of his Master, whatsoever he is instructed in, or trusted with, as *Joseph* and *Jacob* were; he is careful of all the estate that his Master puts into his hand, he will not wrong his Master in his estate, but he labours by all lawful means to increase the estate of his Master, though he knows he ought not to sin and deceive for his Master, but in all lawful waies he will labour to preserve and increase the estate of his Master; nay, this he doth in all faithfulness, whatsoever his hand finds to do in the Imployment that God hath set him in, he doth it in all faithfulness, whether the eye of his Master be upon him or no, he knows the eye of the Lord is upon him; he won't only work when his Master looks on him, but when there is no eye upon him, when his Master is gone into a far Country; he doth all to the Lord with all singleness of heart, and therefore he is faithful in the doing of that work and imployment which is put into his hand.

3. Thirdly, Again, He submits unto all reproofs and corrections of his Master; he won't Answer, murmur, repine, nor turn again when he is smitten, but submits unto his Master: he looks upon him as one that God hath set over him in the Lord; yea, though he meet with much hardship, he is not willing to defame his Master, nor that it should be known, but if he be used most cruelly, in such cruelty as he must complain,

he

he will complain in an orderly way, as to the Magistrate with all meekness, that it may be remedied. There is one particular more and I have done, and that is,

2. Secondly, The relation of the Master, you shall see a gracious heart walking with God in this relation also that God hath set him in as a Master. Why,

1. First, He seeks after the good of the souls of his Servants: he doth not only look to their bodies and no further; he does not use his Servant, as he doth his Cattle, only to work and toil them, and seek no further, but he looks upon them as committed by God and man unto his trust, and therefore he is bound to be faithful to them, in seeking the good of their souls in the first place: therefore it is that he counsels, instructs and prays for them, and above all, he labours to give them good examples in the Family, for he knows all the rest is nothing, his instruction will do no good, his counsels are of no efficacy, if his examples don't go along with them; and so Servants may see his gracious behaviour and carriage, which will be exceeding convincing unto them.

2. Secondly, Again, He also takes care of their outward man; he remembers it's written, that *He that provides not for his Family is worse than an Infidel*, and therefore he endeavours to provide food and raiment for them, lest he should put them upon temptations and provoke them to sin, and put them upon temptation to lie and steal, and be extravagant; and this is occasioned many times through the unfaithfulness of the Master in this particular; he is careful not to express cruelty, one that walks with God won't be cruel to his Servant in laying too much upon him, he knows the groans of his servant in this case will reach up to heaven; the *Israelites* were servants to the *Egyptians*, and you know when they laid heavy burdens

dens upon them, then their cry was heard, and reacht up to heaven; and it was the destruction of the *Egyptians:* A good Master won't be cruel in his work.

3. Thirdly, Neither will he be cruel in his correction: If he doth correct he will do it in measure, he knows he is called the Father of the Family, therefore he ought to carry it as a Father unto his Family, and therefore if he will correct them, he will correct them as his own Children, he'll hate to be cruel to them: And therefore he'll in the

4. Fourth place, Take good counsel from him: a gracious heart, if he shall speak to him of God and Christ in humility, of any disorders he meets withal in a Family, a gracious heart will receive counsel from an inferiour; you know how *Naaman* carried it, in 2 *Kings* 5. 23. now *Naaman* did not reject their counsel though he was a great and mighty Warrier; he doth not say, What have you to do to teach me? to instruct me? Why, saies he, it's good counsel, and it's from God, and he had cause afterward to bless God, that he did through them give him that counsel, for if he had not been, he had ever been Leprous. But,

5. Again, He takes care of his Servants: a gracious man pities them in their need, as the Centurion, *My Servant*, saies he, *lies (at home) sick of a Palsie*, and desires that Christ would speak a word for his healing: he does not turn him out of doors, and send him to provide for himself, but he tenders him, and goes to the Physician Christ himself, and desires that he would please to heal his Servant. And then

6. Sixthly and lastly, He will not send his Servant away empty; that's another part of his carriage: when they have served him many years, and he hath found their faithfulness, and the blessing of the Lord hath been upon him whilst they have been with him in the Family,

Family, he won't send them empty away: God hath laid it as an injunction upon the *Israelites*, that when their Servants had served them so many years, they should not send them empty away, but that they should give them something, something of all that they had got: It was the sin of *Laban*, *Jacob* had served him fourteen years night and day, and for *Jacob*' sake the Lord blessed *Laban*, now it was his sin, *The Lord hath seen thy cruelty, and the Lord hath rebuked thee*; This is part of the carriage of a gracious heart that walks with God; you have seen what he is in all these Family Relations that God hath set him in, in relation of a Husband and Wife, of Parents and Children, of Masters and Servants. And so much for this time.

SER-

SERMON VIII.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

I Am drawing towards a conclusion. I have given you the Character of one that walks with God; I shall therefore proceed:

Having thus given you the Character of one that walks with God, I shall shew you, that this is a dignity, the excellency of any man or woman upon earth, that they thus walk with God as you have heard. To declare unto you therefore wherein the dignity lies; What is the excellency of a man or woman that doth thus walk with God, will appear in divers particulars.

1. First of all, This man that thus walks with God, is nearer God than others; he comes into the presence of God, he is nigh as a special friend and favourite: that puts dignity upon him; it's the dignity of a man to stand in the presence of a Prince, it's an honour, a priviledge: What is it then to stand in the presence of God! it is an Angelical dignity; it's said of the Angels, Christ saies of them, that *they alwaies behold the face of God the Father*, in *Matth.* 18. 10. *Do not of-*

fend my little ones, for their Angels alwaies behold the face of their Father; it's the glory of the Angels that they ever ſtand in the preſence of God, and behold his face: this is the dignity of one that walks with God, he is nigher God than others. But,

2. Again, Secondly, He ſees more of God than other men; I ſay, that ſoul that walks with God as *Enoch* did, ſees more of God than other men; God deals friendly with him, he looks upon him as a fellow-traveller, he'll impart his mind to him freely, he'll reveal his ſecrets, the myſteries of his Kingdom unto them: he that is nigh God is nigh the light, therefore he ſhall not walk in darkneſs; the Lord goes before him continually, he guides and leads him with his counſel: the light ſhall diſcover the way unto him that he ſhall walk in, *Thou ſhalt hear a voice behind thee, ſaying, This is the way, walk in it*; if any man walks with God, it's he that walks thus with God as *Enoch* did. That's a ſecond.

3. But Thirdly, God entertains that ſoul all along his Journey with profitable and delightful diſcourſe. God is ever and anon ſpeaking to him that walks with him, as a man ſpeaks to his friend when he walks with him in his way: and this takes off from the tedioufneſs of the way; though the way be tedious, though it be deep dirty way, yet if a man have a good companion, if he have one to call often to, to diſcourſe pleaſantly, it takes off from the tedioufneſs of the way, it's forgotten: and thus doth the Lord carry it towards the ſoul that walks with him, he ſo ſpeaks to the ſoul that it takes from the tedioufneſs of their Pilgrimage, that they forget the tedioufneſs of it whilſt the Lord ſpeaks ſweetly of his love and goodneſs to them; he often calls upon them as a man doth to his friend that he walks with: he enquires into their ſtates, and bids them be of good

chear;

chear; sometimes he tells them, that the worst is past, and there's better way behind; he tells them of the rest they shall have at night, or of the good entertainment they shall have when they come home; or of the glorious provision that is making ready, and though the way be tedious their rest is long: and this takes off from the tediousness of the way.

4. Again in the fourth place, He supplies their wants; this is another priviledge that that soul hath that walks with God: the Lord will bear all their charges, and take care of them in their Journey, they shall not want any thing that is good for them, either for the outward or inward man: this will comfort a man upon his Journey though he have never a penny in his purse, yet if there be a friend with him, he'll say, I have good store, thou shalt not want so long as I have a penny, I will take care, make provision, and pay all; and thus the Lord doth take care of all, he gives them himself, *Walk before me*, saies he to *Abraham* in *Gen.* 17. 1. *and be thou perfect, and I will make a Covenant with thee:* And what is that? in Vers. 2. *I will be a God unto thee:* Walk with me and I will be a God unto thee, take care for nothing, I'le bear thy charges all the way; I'le be a God unto thee, I'le supply thy wants; the presence of the Lord shall be instead of all comforts, if thou want any thing I'le make it up of my self: I'le be a God unto thee, what wouldst thou have more? And so he takes care to supply all the wants of the inward man, he'll make provision all the way, he hath laid up store of provision in Jesus Christ for them, there is store of righteousness, grace and strength, that his people might want nothing, no not while they are in their Pilgrimage: and therefore he saies unto such a soul, as sometimes the Father said to the eldest son that was brother to the Prodigal in

Luk. 15. the latter end of the Chapter, when he was ready to murmur becauſe his Prodigal brother had ſo much kindneſs ſhewed unto him; Why, ſaies his Father unto him, *Son*, ſaies he, *thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine*, therefore why ſhouldeſt thou murmur, why ſhouldeſt thou repine? thou wanteſt nothing, thou art ever with me, thou enjoyeſt and haſt intereſt in all that I have, it's thine; ſo ſaies the Lord to every ſoul that walks with him, Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine, I'le take care to ſupply all thy wants. This is another ſpecial priviledge to all thoſe that walk with God.

5. Again, Fifthly, He ſupports them; that's another dignity and priviledge that the Lord will ſupport them under all their burdens; when they are ready to faint, and ready to give up the Ghoſt many times in their own apprehenſion, he will ſupport their ſpirits, he will take care that they ſhall not fall: if there lie never ſuch preſſures upon them, the Lord will eaſe them, he'll bear with them, he gives them leave (all the way) to lean upon him; this is a moſt ſweet and excellent priviledge that the ſoul hath that walks with God, I ſay, all the way of their Journey, all the way of the Wilderneſs, the Lord gives them leave to lean upon him; when they are weak and fainting, and ready to be diſcouraged, he gives them leave to lean upon him, his righteouſneſs and ſtrength, *Let him take hold on my righteouſneſs, and make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*; He gives them leave to caſt all burdens upon him, and to venture for Eternity upon him, to lay all the weight of all their cares and fears upon the Lord, that he may ſupport them, and bear their burdens; yea, he doth not only give them leave to lean upon him, but he takes them up in his Arms if they faint at any time, if they fall into a ſwound that they

they can go no farther, the Lord won't go away and leave his fellow-travellers, but he'll take them up in their fainting and swounding fits, he brings forth his Spirits and Cordials, and will not leave them until he hath set them up again, and made them able to follow him: a gracious promise in *Isa.* 40. 11. the Lord makes there unto his people, *He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd, and shall carry his Lambs in his arms*, &c. he'll deal with them as a mother doth with her Child, or as a Shepherd doth with his Lambs, he won't leave them when they'l go no further, but he'll pity and tender them, they have his arm and his bosom when they can't go: he'll help them in all their pressures of spirit, yea, and in all their pressures of the outward man too; he'll support and put his arm under them in every affliction, he'll take off the weight of it, and bear the heaviest end, that end that hath the curse, the bittereſt, the Lord Jesus bears that end; he will not break them in their afflictions, *In all their afflictions he was afflicted*, he felt every burden: This is the gracious carriage of the Lord towards those that walk with him; and this is a mighty priviledge. That's a Sixth.

7. Seventhly, The Lord will knock off their bolts and fetters; this is another priviledge, and a mighty one too; the Lord will knock off their Chains and Fetters, and he will cause them to walk in Liberty: he will deliver them from bondage, he came and died for this very end, *That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their lives long subject to bondage*; he will knock off their Fetters, I say, even the Chains of their unbelief; the further they go with God, the more close they walk with God, the more liberty they meet with, the more liberty from the chains of lusts: the more nigh they come to God,

the more doth unbelief vaniſh, it can't ſtand in the preſence of God, and the more they walk with God, the more acquaintance, and the more friendly God deals with them as fellow-travellers; though there were a great diſtance between man and man before, yet when they travel together, they will have friendly carriage; ſo a man before he walks with God, there is a great diſtance between God and him, till he condeſcend to the poor low condition of his ſervants, and ſpeak more friendly to them, that they may have more acquaintance with God; and the more acquaintance they have with God, the more ſhall the Chains of their unbelief, and the other fetters in their hearts fall off. That's another priviledge.

8. Again in the eighth place, The Lord will keep them from falling, *He upholds the feet of his ſervants, he preſerves their goings*, he is round about their path, and preſerves them, *Prov.* 2. 8. *He keepeth the paths of Judgement, and preſerves the way of his Saints.* He'll diſcover many a ſnare unto them, and teach them how to break thoſe ſnares that others are taken in, and are broken by them; and if the Lord doth ſuffer ſuch a ſoul to fall, it ſhall not lie long, he won't go away and leave him when he is fallen; the Lord takes care of him as his Fellow-traveller, and he will help him up again: when *Peter* fell moſt grievouſly, Chriſt did not leave him ſo; Chriſt turned again, did not go away but look'd upon *Peter*, and helpt him up again; yea, the Lord will not only help that ſoul again when he is fallen, but he will make an advantage of his falls; every ſlip, much more every fall ſhall tend to the good of that ſoul that walks with God, God will bring a great deal of good out of the greateſt evil: the Lord will teach him to walk humbly when he ariſes, he'll teach him to walk more fearingly, more cir-

circumspectly, more dependingly, to take hold on Christ every step he goes, and to take heed that he slide not; nay, he'll cause him to gain ground by his falls, he'll make him run so much the faster, when he shall recover himself, and see what he hath lost, and how God hath gone a good step from him; Oh, it shall be a spur unto the soul, and it shall cause him to run so much the more earnestly after God, and to cleave so much the more closely unto him. Again,

9. In the Ninth place, The Lord leads the soul the safest and nighest way to heaven; I say, that soul that walks with God as *Enoch* did, is led the safest and nighest way to glory; the safest way, the Lord will discover those pits and snares that lie in the way, he will deliver him from those enemies, those robbers, those murderers that lie in his way, and he won't lead him about, but bring him the nighest way to glory. Many a poor creature that walks not with God, may set many a step (as they conceive) towards heaven, but they go about, because they begin not at first to walk with God, and therefore come back, they must come back again and lose their labour; yea, many times Gods own people go about because they do not follow God close; sometimes they think to save themselves, and provide for themselves, to shun sufferings and reproaches, and go about many times to shun them, so that often they lose a great deal of way, and come home benighted: but when the soul cleaves to God, God leads him the nighest way, the direct way to glory, that he shall not come home be-nighted, he shall come home in good season because he cleaveth to the Lord, the Lord was his Counsellor and he follows him.

10. Tenthly, Again, In the last place, to name no more; this is another dignity and priviledge, that soul that walks with God, shall sit down with God;

There remains a reſt, ſaies the Apoſtle, *for the people of God:* there remains a reſt after their long Journey, their tedious Pilgrimage, they ſhall ſit down with God, they ſhall lie in the boſom of God; after they have walked a while with him on earth, they ſhall ſit down with him for ever, and with his Son at his Table in his Kingdom. You ſee the dignity and priviledge of that ſoul that walks with God: Therefore I ſhall make ſome Application of this. And,

Uſe 1. Firſt, Let me ſpeak to thoſe that are ſtrangers to God; to ſuch as yet are found walking in the way of ſinners, a way that God takes no delight in; why, you that are walking in the way of ſinners, are walking in the way that leads to your own deſtruction; Oh, that the Lord would pluck you (with a mighty hand) out of that deſtroying way; why, you are invited, this day the Lord invites you to come and walk with him, all the priviledges that you have heard, do belong to thoſe that walk with God, they are laid open before you to win upon you, and to invite your ſouls to come in and walk with this God; why will you walk with your worſt enemy? Is he not a mad man that will walk with him that ſeeks to deſtroy him? And yet this is the folly that is in the heart of ſinners; whilſt you walk in the waies of ſin, you walk with your worſt enemy, and walk with *a roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour*; who would make choice of a roaring Lion to devour him? ſinners walk with one that would devour them; Oh, that the Lord would perſwade your hearts to turn in and walk with him, he knocks at your doors to day, he ſtays for you: if there be ever a ſinner that hath any deſires caſt in to walk with God, know that the Lord ſtays for you, he is willing to have your company, and therefore he ſends you this invitation; and therefore I beſeech you, and

the

the Lord perſwade your hearts to come up to a reſolution, to give up your ſelves to the Lord; this doth undo men, this want of coming up to a reſolution is the deſtruction of many poor ſouls, that have many a good motion caſt in; when they hear this of God, and the excellency of thoſe that walk with God, they can't but ſee that there is ſomething of God that is deſirable. But alas, the miſery is, men come not up to a reſolution, to a fixed reſolution, to make choice of God, and to walk with him, there's ſomething in God that is deſirable; Ay, but there's another object that the heart is fixed upon, there's ſomething of the world, there's ſomething in luſt; oh, my friends know it, you can't ſerve God and Mammon, you can't ſerve God and your luſts, Faith can't endure this divided heart, and therefore I beſeech you, look up to the Lord to bring off your hearts to a reſolution, that you may ſay, Well, I'le make choice of the Lord, I'le make choice of the Lord for my portion, let all the world go, ſo I may have God; come up to a reſolution to part with all, though you loſe all, though you loſe your friends, though you loſe your relations and comforts, know that whatever you loſe for the Lords ſake, ſhall be made up abundantly in him: oh, therefore I beſeech you that you would eye that fulneſs that is in God, this may help to bring off the heart, to bring up the ſoul to cloſe in a reſolution, to come up and walk with him: when the ſoul looks and eyes the fulneſs that there is in God, there's whatſoever may anſwer all loſſes, whatſoever may ſupply all wants, and ſatisfie all deſires, there's a fulneſs in God, a fulneſs of Grace, and a fulneſs of truth is in Chriſt, there's fulneſs of ſatisfaction and contentment, and therefore the Lord being yours, you ſhall not need to go from him, you ſhall not need to go out to ſeek ſatisfaction elſewhere:

though

though all the world should forsake, and your comforts leave you, yet there's that in God may answer all; and though you part with all your lusts, yea, though you should lose all the world for the Lords sake, that you may give up your selves to walk with him, know assuredly that it will never repent you, you will not repent you: the very first day that you walk with God, the very first hour of your walking with God, will bring you such contentment and satisfaction into your spirits that you will not repent you that you have left all your old waies and lusts, all sin, and all your Companions for the Lords sake, that so you may walk with him. And moreover I beseech you, that you would make use of Jesus Christ in your coming to God: if God shall perswade your hearts, to give up your selves to walk with God, make use of Christ at your first coming; there's no man can walk with God at his first coming, till the son of God makes way for him, *Two cannot walk together except they be agreed*; God and man were fallen out in *Adam*, now these must be agreed; now, oh let your souls breath after Christ, you that desire to walk with God, begin first with Christ, let your hearts breath after him, look to him as your peacemaker, to be your reconciler, to make God and you one, to bring you into more nigh acquaintance and fellowship with the Father, that God and you may be one in Christ: Oh, look up unto the righteousness of Jesus Christ every soul of you, you can't walk with God, if you be naked you can't abide his presence; you know *Adam* ran out from the presence of God when God walk'd in the Garden, he could not walk because God was there, he runs and hides himself; a naked creature can't endure the presence of God: look up to the righteousness of Jesus Christ, throw your selves as poor naked creatures upon the righteousness

ouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo coming in the righteouſneſs of the Son unto the Father, you may have friendly acceptance, that you may walk with God for the future.

Uſe 2. One word alſo to thoſe that have intereſt in God and Jeſus Chriſt: Oh, that I might ſtir you up alſo to walk with God, to walk with God as *Enoch* did. Brethren, conſider I pray you, Did not Chriſt bring you into acquaintance with the Father for this end? Were not you at a diſtance? ye were ſtrangers, ye were enemies, you were far off from God! what pains did Jeſus take to bring you acquainted with God, that ſo you might walk with him as a man with his friend? It coſt Chriſt dear, it was a hard work to make up the breach, it was a mighty work to bring you into acquaintance with God; do not neglect therefore your communion with God in your daily walk, ſeeing it coſt Chriſt ſo dear.

Conſider alſo that God hath made you all for this very end, he hath given you legs that you might walk with him, he hath given ſome ſtrength to thoſe that were lame, that could not ſtand; I ſay, when he brought you home to himſelf, he gave you ſome ſtrength; it was then that he came to open the eyes of the blind, and to ſtrengthen the feet of the lame; and he ſtrengthens their feet that ſo they may walk with God his Father: Is not the Lord your beſt friend? Is he not the ſweeteſt companion you can chooſe? and if ſo, I beſeech you take heed that you do not neglect your walking with him: what, will you leave your friend? will you leave your friend upon the way? Oh do not give the Lord occaſion to accuſe you of this Ingratitude; had you not need to keep cloſe to God, do not you need his preſence, do not you need him to comfort you, to quicken you, to revive you, to ſtrengthen

then you, to supply your wants, to bear your charges, to keep off the blasts, to rebuke temptations, and to vanquish enemies, to help you up when you are fallen, to make advantage of your falls, to lead you the nighest and the safest way to glory? Oh, that the sense of your weaknes and infirmities might cause you to cleave close to the Lord, and take heed that you don't depart and go out from walking with him: And in your walking with God, I shall but give you a few Directions and conclude.

Direct. 1. In your walking with God be sure that you follow him in every step, go you where God goes, walk you where God walks, if you mean to keep the presence of God look to this; Oh, go to the Lord and desire that he would teach your souls where he walks, as the Spouse, *Tell me (O thou whom my soul loveth) where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon:* that she may go there; Why, the Lord walks in his Ordinances, he walks amongst his people: the Son of God walks in the midst of his Golden Candlesticks, there's his walk; would you know where to find him, come in his walks, in the midst of his Golden Candlesticks, in the midst of his people, in the fellowship of his Saints, those that worship him in the beauties of holiness, in Gospel order, there the Lord walks; you that expect the presence of the Lord, that would not lose that comfortable presence of his which you might enjoy, take heed you do not turn away, where God hath said he walks.

Direct. 2. Again, I beseech you, that you would be alwaies careful to give God the upper hand in every walking, in every passage of your life give God the upper hand; do not ascribe to your selves, lift up the name of God, be content that he should be exalted, and you debased, *Not to us Lord, not to us Lord;*

put

put away with both hands, give us nothing, nothing belongs to us, but all belongs to God, glory belongs to God; why, if you be enabled to do for God, if you be enabled to suffer for God, give nothing to your selves, give him the glory, put it away from you, desire him to take it all, and ascribe nothing to your selves, but what he is pleased to give in freely unto you, oh give him the preheminence in all, and his Son the preheminence in all things; be content that the day of the Lord should be upon whatsoever is high and lifted up; upon all the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and upon all the Oaks of *Bashan*; upon whatsoever is in your hearts and spirits: desire him to pull down all high thoughts, and to lay you low at his foot-stool; be content that you and all creatures may be debased, and the Lord alone may be exalted through his son Jesus Christ; it should be a Christians care in all things, I say, to give God the upper-hand.

Direct. 3. Again, Thirdly, Take heed you do not take up where God doth not take up; do not you sit down where God sits not down, for you may haply lose him, God may go out of sight, and you may run hard before you can find God again; don't take up in your selves, don't take up in creatures, don't say here I'le rest, here I'le take up, don't set up here, and say, here I'le rest and take up in this creature; if you will take up in creatures, and rest in them, where God doth not rest, why God rests in himself, and wholly in himself for ever: he rests in himself, and he rests in his son, *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*; all the delight and complacency of the soul of the Father is in the person of the son, *This is my Beloved Son*; Oh, take heed of creatures that your comforts be not snares to you, don't take up in them, follow on after

the

the Lord, let your spirits take up no where but in God himself, and in Christ, whom he hath given to be the center of your souls, and a foundation for you to build upon for ever.

Direct. 4. Again, Fourthly, Entertain sweet entercourse between God and your souls, I say, this I desire, that sweet entercourse with God may be entertained by you, let God be often thought of by you; will you go with a friend and travel with him, and speak not to him? Oh, you will speak often to him: you that walk with God, speak often to God, keep up that entercourse betwixt God and your souls listen to what God speaks to you; a great deal is lost because we don't hearken to him, the soul is not intent, the ear is not bored to hear what God speaks, therefore many a sweet word, and many a comfortable word is lost, because the soul don't listen after God; therefore I beseech you Brethren, know it is your duty all the time you are walking with God, it is your duty to hear what God speaks; let your soul be attentive unto the Lord, that so you may hear every word, whether it be a word of counsel or a word of direction, or a word of consolation: be ye alwaies either speaking to the Lord, or else hearkening to hear what the Lord shall speak unto you; this becomes those that have given up themselves to walk with God.

Direct. 5. Fifthly, And to say no more, Take heed of those rubs and lets that are in the way: take heed of that which may hinder, of that which may take you off from walking with God; there's many a snare, there's many a rub in the way.

1. First, Take heed of this present evil world; it's a snare, it's a bait that draws many off from walking with God, *Demas hath forsaken me*, saith *Paul*, *he hath forsaken me for this present evil world*,

world, the Devil catcht him with this bait: Oh, take heed of the snares of the world, the cares of the world, the honours of the world, the riches of the world, the pleasures of the world, these are snares, I say, in which many are taken.

2. Secondly, Take heed ye turn not out into any way of sin whatsoever, give no countenance to any evil way in your spirits or in your courses; the God that you walk with, he *is a God of pure eyes*, he can't endure to walk in the defiled waies; if you will walk in the dirt, you shall not have God to go along with you, God can't endure to walk in waies of impurity, and therefore, oh, desire the Lord to make you watchful over the waies of your spirit, and over the waies of your conversation, that so you may not turn aside to those defiled waies in which God takes no pleasure to abide in. And,

3. Thirdly, Take heed of an unbelieving heart, which is another snare, and is the cause of many departings from God, *An evil heart of unbelief*; and therefore don't give way unto it, don't close with it, don't take part with unbelief against the work of God in your own spirits, for if you take part with Satan against the Lord, what a grief will it be unto the Lord, to whom you have given up your selves to walk with him? Oh, that the Lord would make you that are his people, watchful over your souls! you have given up your selves, and therefore take heed you don't turn aside; maintain this communion, desire that it may be upheld betwixt God and your souls: and remember this,

That it's your greatest priviledge whilst you are upon earth, that you may thus walk with God, a mighty priviledge that poor dust and ashes, poor worms should be taken to walk with the great God;

God; that God should make choice to have such for his Companions, his Fellow-travellers; Oh, it is infinite rich and Free-grace, therefore do not slight it, do not contemn it, but labour to walk up to such relation; it's your dignity, and your priviledge to walk with God. So much for this time, and for this part of the Text.

SER-

SERMON IX.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

YOU have heard of *Enoch's walking*; here's *Enoch's Rest*: here's recorded what befell him at the end of his Journey, he went a step out of sight, *He walked with God, and he was not, God took him: He was not*, the phrase is sometimes applied unto those whom God takes away by ordinary death; so saies *Jacob* of his sons, whom he supposed to be dead, in *Gen.* 42. 36. *Joseph is not, and Simeon is not:* and so in *Jer.* 31. 15. you shall see this phrase applied to those that God takes away by ordinary death, *Thus saith the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her Children, and refused to be comforted, because her Children they were not:* and so some do conceive that *Enoch* was taken away, as other men are, because it's *appointed for all men once to die*; but the Apostle must be our Interpreter: he tells us the meaning of that phrase, as applied to *Enoch*, *He was not, for God took him*; in *Heb* 11. 5. *By Faith Enoch*

was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him: he was not found, saith the Apostle, *for God had translated him*, he was not found amongst men, he was no longer of this world, nor in this world, he was taken into another world, into another place, for *God had translated him*, and he was not found, and it was not in an ordinary way as other men: he was translated, God took him. And so it may be said, God takes and receives all the spirits of his servants: but *Enoch's* departure, his farewel to the world, was in an extraordinary way, God did not take him as he takes others of his servants by death, but God took him from death, he was translated *that he should not see death*, saies the Apostle. There are many particulars that may be useful to us before we come to the main, concerning *Enoch*, which we shall hardly reach at this time.

But to Consider that phrase, *He was not.* He was not in the world, of the world; you must not think that *Enoch* ceased to be, he did not lose his Being: the Text saies, *He was not*, neither do any of the servants of God lose their Being when they are translated, when taken away by death, but he had no being as to the things of this world, he had a being as to God and Heaven, and as to an invisible world, so he was; and so it may be said of all Gods people that leave this world, *They are not*, they are not as to the world; they have no being as to their comforts, relations, friends, employments, and callings; so they are not; but as to God, Christ, and Heaven, and to the things of an invisible world, their being is not lost but perfected; they have no being as to their relations, death cuts that asunder. You shall see what *Job* saies, *Job* 7. he complains there, that all relations cease there, and the Servant is free from the Master; as this relation,

so

so all other relations when death comes, so that a man he is not, he is no longer as to his friends and relations. And so he is as to the comforts of this world, see *Job* 7. 9. *As the Cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more:* he shall return no more to see his house, neither shall his place know him more, he is consumed like a Cloud, and gone down to the Grave; and what, hath he no being? No, he speaks only in relation to the things here, and to the comforts and enjoyments, as to his house, and so to all other comforts of his, he shall not return to his house, neither shall his comforts know him any more. Take notice of this, it will hold forth something that is useful to us: It will teach you three things.

1. First of all, It will teach Christians to mind the things of God and Heaven more, to be more taken up with the things of the world that is to come; why, as to all the things of this life, as to all your friends, comforts, relations, house and land, and other accommodations, you shall not be e're long, and therefore seek more after the things of God and Christ, where you shall have a being to eternity. Think upon this, Christians, when you are ready to lose God in the World, when you sleep over head and ears in your worldly employments; Oh, think of this, the time is a coming, the time is at hand when it shall be said, That you are no more of the world, and you shall have no being at all as to the things of the world, your friends shall know you no more, and your relations, your comforts, your house shall know you no more, you shall be to all these things as if you had not been, as if you had no being, or as if you had no relation to them; Oh, then whilst you are in the world don't live as those that are of the world, but say as Christ did, *Now, Father,*

I am no more of this world; live more there where your being shall be to eternity: Live more upon God and Christ, and be more exercised in the contemplation of the things of the invisible world, there your being shall be to eternity; and don't live so much upon those poor low outward things, where you shall have no being e're long; but when the world shall speak of you, they shall say, You are not, even as it was of *Enoch* here, *Enoch* was not, as to this world he was not.

2. Secondly, This may also instruct you how to carry it towards the loss of friends and relations: when God shall take away any of your friends and relations, take heed you don't let out natural affections towards them when God hath taken them, for they are not, as to you they are not, they are none of yours, you have no relation to them, death hath broken it, they were given you for a time, your Husband, your Wife, your Children, they were given you for a time, to be comforts to you for a time, till the Lord should call for them; but when the Lord hath taken them, they are no longer yours, they are not, as to you: It's sinful then to let out natural affections towards them, as to look upon them as yours, your Husband, your Wife, your Children, they are not as to you, but they are as to the Lord, compleat in him, and as to you they are not: and therefore it's sinful unto you, to let out natural affections, when God hath broken your relations. And,

3. Thirdly, This may give some comfort in the loss of friends, when they die in the Lord; they are not lost, they don't cease to be: If they were annihilated and destroyed, and if they had no being any where, there's cause to mourn, there's a loss indeed; they only disappear unto you, and unto this visible world, but they are not lost, they appear in the presence of God,

though

though you see them not, and they have no being as to you, yet as to God in heaven, in another world, they have a being, a glorious being, a perfect being, and therefore there is no cause why we should mourn for them as if they were utterly lost. That's the first consideration, *Enoch* was not, as to this world; and as to the relations of this life he was not. But again,

2. Secondly, Observe how easily *Enoch* was translated, how easie God makes *Enoch*'s passage to another world; he walks with God, and God took him, and we hear no more of him: he walked all his life with God, and at the end of his course God took him along with him; it's spoken of him as if he went but a step further, and he was not here, he went but a step further, and he went along with God, God took him to himself. We may observe that God can make the passage of his servants easie to another world: such as walk with God on earth, God makes their passage easie to another world, so it was with *Enoch*.

Quest. But is it so to others, *Enoch*'s translation was easie, for *Enoch*, he was not dissolved, soul and body did not part, but both were taken up to live with God, but is it so to others?

Answ. Yea, God can and doth make it so unto his people that walk with him: though death may seem a strait passage, and a dark entry, yet the Lord can make it lightsome, he can make it easie unto his servants: what an easie matter was it for *Moses* to die, when he had walked with God all his life? It was spoken of him as an ordinary thing, *Go up and die*, God bid him go up upon the Mount and die there, go and die there, and *Moses* went up and God made that death easie to him: And so it was spoken of all the Patriarchs, and those that walked with God in those old Ages, God made this strait passage easie to them,

therefore it's called a falling asleep, after they had served their Generation *they fell asleep*; or they were *gathered up to their Fathers*; it's set forth by such expressions; *Jacob* leaned upon his staff and raised up himself and blessed his Children, and speaking of the things of God and Heaven, and so he fell asleep; God makes it easie unto them that walk with him, for they that walk with God gain experiences of him, I say, they that walk with God treasure up experiences of Gods gracious dealings, they shall see how God hath been with them many a time: he hath been with them in many deaths, he hath been with them in the fire, he hath been with them in the water, he hath been with them in many Jeopardies and dark conditions, he hath delivered them: they have gained many experiences of God, therefore they will trust in God, they'l trust in him when they walk through the Valley of the shadow of death, he is a sure friend, he is a tried friend, and therefore they can't but rest in him. But,

Again, They that walk with God walk by Faith, now it's faith makes death easie: all those Worthies spoken of in *Heb.* 11. died willingly, for they died in Faith, Faith makes the strait passage easie, For,

1. First, Faith discovers the Victory of Christ, I say, it makes discovery of the victory of Christ over death and the Grave, presents the Saviour that is the Conquerour, that hath disarmed the strong man, that hath taken away the sting of the Serpent; now when the soul by Faith sees that death is disarmed, and the sting is taken out, it's easie then to grapple with him.

2. Secondly, Again, Faith takes hold of the promises which are grounded upon the faithfulness and truth of God for its security, I say, it takes hold of those promises which are made in faithfulness and truth: why, the Lord hath said that he will be with his people in all

all their ſtraits, yea, when they walk through the valley and ſhadow of death, that he will never leave them, he will never forſake them; now the diſcovery of this to the ſoul makes death eaſie.

3. Thirdly, Again, Faith looks beyond death, it's higher, it's taller than death, it can look over the ſhoulders of death, it hath a piercing eye, it can ſee through the darkneſs of the Grave, and it can behold the tops of the Towers of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, it can ſee the Land that lies beyond the Land of death, it ſees the dark entry and the low valley that doth over-ſhadow it, it doth lead unto that Land, that Land of bleſſedneſs that the Lord hath prepared for his people, and therefore whilſt faith is thus exerciſed, death is made eaſie, and they that walk with God walk and live by faith, and therefore to them is death made eaſie. Yea,

4. Fourthly, Again, Death is made eaſie to them, for by walking with God they have gained acquaintance with God, and it's acquaintance with God that makes death eaſie: when a ſoul hath walked with God as with his friend all his life, it's not afraid to go to God at laſt, becauſe he is his friend; he knows God thoroughly, and therefore can truſt him, he knows his gracious diſpoſition, and the love that is in his heart, *He that comes to God muſt believe that he is*, ſaies the Apoſtle, and that *He is the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him:* till this grace of the love of God be diſcovered, the ſoul can't come to him on earth, it can't draw nigh to him by faith, much leſs can he come freely to him in heaven. Why this is the cauſe why death is ſo terrible, becauſe his acquaintance is no more with God; but when the ſoul hath lived as in heaven, and converſed with God, and beheld his face, and follows him continually with this acquaintance he hath gained with God, it doth make the paſſage of death (though

ſtrait in it ſelf, yet) eaſie: And therefore to apply this.

Uſe 1. I beſeech you, you that walk with God, that you would not be diſcouraged through the apprehenſion of the ſtraitneſs of this paſſage: you know not how eaſie God can make it, why ſhould you diſtruſt him? do not fear the greatneſs of the pains, God can make them eaſie, God can allay them, God can take away the ſenſe of them, God can give in that which can ſweeten them; remember who went before you, hath not the Lord Jeſus gone before you? He ſet himſelf in the fore-front of the Battel, the paſſage was a great deal ſtraiter when Chriſt went through it, he hath widened it and made it far more eaſie: Believers, you have ſeen the worſt that death can do to you, you have ſeen it in Chriſt, if it had overcome Chriſt you might have fear'd it, but Chriſt would try the experiment firſt upon himſelf, and you have ſeen the worſt that it can do; Jeſus Chriſt is engaged with you, if you ſhould periſh, Chriſt himſelf had as good have periſhed; it's all one whether he be overcome in his perſon, or in his members; Oh, therefore, I ſay, be not diſcouraged at the apprehenſion of the ſtraitneſs of the paſſage, and darkneſs of the entry, but look to Chriſt that hath gone before you, and only let it be your care whilſt you live, to live by Faith, and to live in conſtant communion with God, God will take care of the reſt: And,

Uſe 2. Again, How ſhould you bleſs the Lord Chriſt! What cauſe have you to bleſs the Lord, and to admire the riches of wiſdom, and the riches of power, and the riches of goodneſs that hath made death to be thus eaſie? I tell you, it is not ſo in it ſelf: Chriſtians, you are beholding to Chriſt for this, death is not eaſie in it ſelf, it is moſt terrible in it ſelf, it hath

brought

brought down mighty spirits of wicked men; Oh! whither shall I go, said *Nero?* when death was at hand: It was not so easie with Christ; oh, it was exceeding strait when he ventured to pass through, it was for your sakes that he entred the passage first: Oh! admire his wisdom, goodness and power, and bless his name for this both in life and death. That's a second thing we considered, *Enoch was not, God took him:* his translation is spoken of him as a very easie thing, he walked a step further, and returned no more, *and God took him.* There is one Particular more which I shall give but a hint on, and that is, *He was not found.*

So saies the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *Heb.* 11.5. *He was not found, for God had translated him; He was not found*, and that implies, he was sought for when God had took him, *They sought for him, but he was not found*, saies the Apostle: And so it was with *Elijah*, in 2 *Kings* 2. latter end of the Chapter, the Prophet sends out fifty men to seek after him; and it's very like they did so for *Enoch*, but he was not found, for God took him.

Observe, It is usual to undervalue mercies whilst we have them, which are prized dearly when once they are gone; I say, it is usual with the sons of men to undervalue mercies whilst they have them, which they would seek for when once they are gone: thus we deal with persons, and thus we deal with other mercies; With Persons, you know how *Samuel* was undervalued by *Saul* whilst he lived, and the Word of the Lord that he brought to *Saul* was rejected; but when *Samuel* was gone, then *Saul* seeks for him; nay, he was so violent that he seeks him in an unlawful way, even to raise him up from the dead, that he might acquaint him with the Will of the Lord. And so *John* Baptist was persecuted and banished, and *Herod* cut off his head, but

when

when he was gone, then *Herod* prized him; and so when *Herod* heard of the fame of *Jesus*, that he did great things, *Surely it is John Baptist that is risen up again:* here's mighty works indeed: And thus we deal not only with *Persons*,

But thus we deal with other *Mercies*, whilst we have them, we undervalue them, that God is forced to take them away, to let us know what the worth of them is: *Israel* did not prize her mercies, outward Mercies, Corn, Wine and Oyl, Flax and Wool, and therefore God was forced to take them away, to let them know the worth of them, *I will take away my Corn, my Wine and my Oyl, my Flax and my Wool*, Hos. 4. Yea, thus we deal with God himself, thus we deal with God and Christ, and with the great and precious things of God; how did *Esau* despise his birth-right, how contemptibly did he speak of it, whilst he had it? *What will my birth-right do me good*, saies he, *seeing I am ready to die?* And yet afterward, when it was gone he sought it with tears, when *Jacob* had got the blessing he sought it with tears, and he could not obtain it. Yea, this is not only in the hearts of the wicked; if it were only in the wicked it were the less: but it is in the hearts of Gods own people to undervalue the things of God, whilst they enjoy them, and so give the Lord cause to strip them of them. *Israel* had the presence of God amongst them, but they did not prize God, and therefore saies God, *I will go and return to my first place; in their affliction they will seek me early.* Thus we deal with other of Gods precious ones, many times they are undervalued, and we know not the worth of them, till such time as they are removed, till God takes them away: As it is said concerning the Jews in *Matth.* 23. that Christ was amongst them, and Preached the everlasting

lasting Gospel to them, and they received it not: But when the Gospel was removed from them, then they prized it, *Behold your house is left unto you desolate:* Why? in *Matth.* 21. there you have the same words, when the Children cried, saying, *Hosanna, Hosanna to the Highest*, the Jews were offended; when the people said of Christ, *Hosanna, and blessed is he that comes in the Name of the Lord*; they were offended in the 15 Verse, and Christ doth rebuke them for this, Well, saies he, (when they cried, *Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord*) you are displeased, the time is a coming, that you would give all that you enjoy, to see such a man as you have seen, but I will teach you by the absence of this mercy, of which you shall say, Welcom indeed, and *blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord:* I say, what base hearts and spirits are within us, that we should put God unto this labour, that we should cause God to walk in this way towards us, to take away our mercies, that we may know how to prize them! Oh, it is an unworthy heart, there is a great deal of the spirit of *Esau*, to despise the blessing whilst we had it, and then afterwards weep for it, and sought it with tears, but found it not. And therefore I shall conclude with this word of Exhortation.

Use 3. Let us learn to prize our mercies, I say, whilst we enjoy our mercies, let us learn to prize them, because the time is coming when they shall not be to us, they shall not be found, we shall seek them, and shall not find them: God hath given you friends and relations; Oh, my Brethren, prize them, use them for Gods glory, do all the good you can to them whilst you have them, receive all the good

that

that may be from them whilſt you have them, for the time is a coming when they ſhall not be to you. It was *Job's* argument with God, you ſhall ſee in *Job* 7. the laſt Verſe, and it is a very ſtrong argument, and *Why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away my iniquity, and pardon it quickly?* Speak a good word quickly to thy Servant, I cannot hold out long, Lord, ſaies he, I cannot hold out long, now I ſhall ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, and I ſhall not be: Lord pardon, pardon thy ſervant *Job*, whilſt thou haſt a *Job* to pardon, Lord, do good to me whilſt thou haſt an occaſion to do good to me, e're I ſleep in the duſt: you ſhall ſeek me then, and I ſhall not be: that you ſhall ſay, oh that I had ſuch a friend to do good to, or that I had ſuch a friend to receive good from: Oh, take the preſent opportunity therefore of doing and receiving good; and this is ſpoken not only of all *Perſons* but of all *Things*, prize them whilſt you have them, prize them whilſt you enjoy them, for time is coming when they ſhall not be.

And Conſider this, Let me ſay this to you, The Lord is this day tendering grace to you, he ſtands, he knocks, he invites you, he beſeeches you, he deſires you to open, he is willing to pardon multitudes of tranſgreſſions, to waſh away thouſands, and ten thouſands of tranſgreſſions and ſins, and to ſubdue them alſo; Oh, that the Lord would give you hearts to ſeek after this preſent mercy, you'l ſeek them hereafter when they ſhall not be; Oh, take heed leſt Chriſt ſpeak to you as he ſpake to the Jews, which was a fearful ſentence, becauſe of their miſtaking their time, and neglecting their opportunity, *Joh.* 7. 34. *You ſhall ſeek me*, ſaies Chriſt, *and ſhall not find me*,

and

and where I am, you cannot come: he had said a little before, *And I am with you, and am coming to them that seek me*; and afterward, *You shall seek me, and shall not find me*; Christ was with them a little while preaching and holding forth, and urging mercy and grace, beseeching of them to come in, they refuse and reject life, Well, saies Christ, I have sought you, and you would not be found; you would not follow me; the time is coming when you shall seek me, and shall not find me, and where I am you cannot come; and you that fear the Lord,

I beseech you, be you warned also, take heed you don't slight your mercies, your present enjoyments of God, lest the Lord also teach you to know the worth by the want; I say, take heed that you do not abuse your mercies, take heed that you do not grow cold, and dead, and loose, and formal, under the enjoyment of the means of getting nigher God, which you enjoy more than formerly, for what pity is it that we should grow worse when God is better? That we should be further off from drawing nigh to God, when God is drawing nigh to us? What pity is it that the Sun-shine and fair weather should do harm? Doth not sad experience teach us that many Christians are further off from God now than when the means were lesser, in their getting near to God; take heed God don't let you know by sad experience what the loss of his presence is, and that he don't let you know by sad experience what the loss of Ordinances are, what the want of mercies are; it shews abundance of corruption that is in the heart, but it is mercy if God will teach his people any way; it is the saddest way of teaching that God will make use of, to recount what once we had, and what once we enjoyed, and now are stript of, for want of improvement: we had the Sabbaths, the teachings of God, we

had

had the Ordinances, but now ſtript of all; and therefore may (as they) ſit down by the waters of *Babylon*, and weep moſt bitterly; it is a ſad way of teaching, yet it is mercy if God will chooſe any way of teaching and drawing theſe ſad and drowſie hearts of ours more to himſelf. Thus you have had ſome hints of what *Enoch* was, *He was not found, for God had tranſlated him, God took him*; the main Point is yet behind, *viz.* to conſider whither *Enoch* was tranſlated, and wherefore he was tranſlated, and the year in which he was tranſlated, which was three hundred ſixty five years, and was the ſhorteſt life of all the Patriarchs. But ſo much ſhall ſerve for this time.

SER-

SERMON X.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

WE have done with *Enoch's* walk, we are come to *Enoch's Rest*, *He was not, for God took him*; I have opened the phrase to you the last time I spake. But I shall proceed to what is still behind in the Text.

He was not, for God took him, And God took him: there is a great dispute amongst many, to what *place Enoch* was taken. There are many both of the Papists and others that place *Enoch* in earthly Paradise: they say *Enoch* was not taken into Heaven but into Paradise, and that this *Enoch* and *Elijah* are those two Witnesses that shall come again at the end of the world to discover and destroy Antichrist; there is such a Tradition generally amongst them, and others have received it from them; but there is not the least ground for it in the Word of God, that *Enoch* and *Elijah* should be those Witnesses spoken of in *Rev.* 11. for certainly those Witnesses are no other but the servants of

of God spoken of, that have stood up in all Ages since Christ, to bear witness to the name and truth of Jesus; and therefore I see nothing why we may not assert, that *Enoch* was taken up into Heaven, that he ascended in body into Heaven. You shall see in 2 *Kings* 2.11. it is spoken there of *Elijah* who was translated even as *Enoch*, *And it came to pass as they still went on, and talked, that behold (there appeared) a Chariot of fire, and Horses of fire, and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into Heaven:* if *Elijah* went into Heaven, why not *Enoch?*

Object. But it may be Objected, Is not Jesus Christ the first-fruits of them that ascend? Did not Christ open the door by his blood? How then could *Enoch* or *Elijah* ascend into Heaven before Christ came and opened the door?

Answ. To which I Answer, It is true that Christ is the first-fruits of them that ascend, and the way to Heaven is set open by the blood of Christ, and there was none ever ascended but by vertue of the blood of Christ, that sets open the door to them; but the efficacy of the blood of Christ did reach to them that lived before him; and therefore in *Rev.* 13 8. he is called *The Lamb slain from the foundations of the World*, in the purpose of God; yea, it was accepted of God as if done already; God the Father took the Word of his Son for the payment of the Debt, he knew that he was able to make good his word, and would be faithful to him, wherefore he trusted him before he discharged the Debt, before the price was actually paid, so that the vertue of Christs blood did even reach to them, even many thousand years before he came in the flesh to suffer: for the Father took his word, and the Son took the Fathers word for the salvation of those that should be brought in many hundred years after the

debt

debt was paid; the salvation of all that belong to God, who should live from Christs time to the end of the world: the Son gave the full price into the fathers hand, and he relies upon him, upon his word for the discharge of the debt, and for the receiving of poor sinners to life and favour, as they shall be brought in in all Ages; and therefore, Dear Brethren, I beseech you, take notice of the mighty vertue of the death of Christ, mighty vertue was in it, that he should be accepted before-hand, that it should reach as far as *Enoch*, as far as *Adam*, that it should be accepted for those that lived many thousand years before Christ, before the debt was paid; it holds forth the mighty efficacy of the blood of Christ; if it had been only available for those that had lived after him, after Christ was come in the flesh, and dead and risen, and had discharged the debt, if it had reach'd only to those, it had not been so much: it is not so much, saies *Ezekiah*, for the shadow to go forward in the Dial, but for the shadow to go backward so many degrees, that holds forth a deal of the mighty power of God to his conviction; and so the blood of Christ goes backward so many years to them that lived in the beginning of the world, before the price was actually paid: O the infinite vertue and efficacy that is in this blood of Christ! Oh, know what strong ground of consolation there is in this, to you that are Believers now under the Gospel: if it reach'd so far, if it went backward, if it went as far as *Enoch*, to open the gate of Heaven to him, how much more shall this reach you that are believers under the Gospel, that live directly under the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ. God bad *Enoch* welcom for this blood that was to be shed; if he set the door open to him, when the price was not actually paid, oh how much more shall God bid the Saints welcom, to come in the

name of such a Saviour that was dead, is risen and ascended, now to sit at the right-hand of God, and present the efficacy of his blood for ever? Oh! how may this be improved, and what sweet lives might Christians lead, and with what a full wind might they sail, and lanch forth into the Ocean of Eternity, when they live directly under the efficacy of such a blood as this is, that reach'd so far backward, even as far as *Enoch?* for it was by vertue of this blood that *Enoch* was saved.

But further, It's said, *God took him:* That phrase implies three things.

1. First of all, That *Enoch* was taken up into a state of *Communion with God*, of near Communion with God, *God took him*; God took him to himself. He had walked with God whilst he was upon earth, but he was not taken up into neareſt Communion until now; the Saints in heaven are taken into nigheſt Communion; their Communion here upon earth is interrupted many times, God comes now and then and gives a poor soul a visit, but they are not taken in into God till such time as God removes the Mount of this visible world: they are here put out to School, God will give them good education, he will bring them up for heaven; and therefore it is not alwaies that they have their Fathers presence, now and then God comes and visits them: but there is another life in which God shall take his people to himself, he shall send for his Children home, and then they shall be for ever with the Lord, I say, for ever with the Lord; *Whilst we are here*, saies the Apostle, *we are absent from the Lord*; *Whilst we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord* and therefore no wonder why the Saints are breathing so much after that other life, *Looking for, and hastning after the appearance of Christ*, because they are not taken in till then, here they are strangers, and here they are absent from

the

the Lord in a great measure, though they walk with God as *Enoch* did, yet he will not take them into that neareſt Communion, till they come to end this life.

2. But again, Secondly, As it doth denote a ſtate of near Communion which the Saints enjoy in heaven, ſo it doth hold forth that fulneſs of light, life and glory that the Saints ſhall there enjoy: *God took him*, he was taken into God, taken up to the enjoyment of the fulneſs that is in God; here they are narrow veſſels, and are not capable of receiving much, but there the ſouls of his Saints ſhall be taken into God, and ſo ſhall be filled with his fulneſs. Believers here walk with God, and God doth dwell in them, but ſo long as they dwell below, they don't dwell ſo much in God: but there is a time a coming when they ſhall dwell wholly in God, they ſhall be taken up into that fulneſs; they ſhall be as ſo many veſſels that are caſt into the Ocean that ſhall be filled; every one ſhall be filled full to the brim: I ſay, this holds forth that phraſe of fulneſs of glory that the Saints do enjoy in Heaven, *God took him*, and he was taken into God.

3. Again, Thirdly, It holds forth an act of free grace which was put forth towards *Enoch* as well as others: *God took him*, or received him, and to receive, it holds forth the free grace of God; *Enoch walked with God*, but he was not taken for his walking, not becauſe he had walked ſo and ſo with God in his Generation, he was not therefore taken, but he was received; it was free-grace received him: My Brethren, I beſeech you then know, what you can only plead before God, though you have walked with God never ſo long in your Generation, yet you can't at laſt plead to be taken up becauſe you have walked with God; Alas! the Lord ſees ſo many ſlips, ſo many ſtumblings, ſo many falls, there's ſo much crookedneſs in the way

of the heart, in the way of the converſation, even in the beſt of Saints, that if the Lord ſhould judge them according to their walkings, they were undone: thoſe Hypocrites plead a great deal, when they cried, *Lord, Lord, have we not Propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name have caſt out Devils, and done many wonders*, and yet Chriſt bids them depart for he knew them not; there is no pleading of works, there is no pleading of worthineſs, and of the creatures righteouſneſs, when the creature comes to ſtand before Chriſt; if you could walk with God as many years as *Enoch* did, yet at the end of your walk, at the end of your courſe, you muſt lay down all, and be willing to enter in as ſinners, that is, at the door of free-grace, not through any door of your own works or righteouſneſs.

And again, How does this call upon the people of God to be exceeding careful to receive Chriſt? Oh! receive him freely, he receives you freely here, and he will receive you freely hereafter: how are you engaged to receive him freely, to cloſe fully with him, and with the tenders of life and grace, of righteouſneſs and holineſs, which are held forth in and through him? Receive Chriſt freely, and receive the Word of Chriſt freely, though it be never ſo contrary to fleſh and blood, though it croſſes your beloved luſts, though it croſs your profits, though it croſs your delights, though it be the Word and Truth for which you muſt ſuffer; yet, oh why ſhould not you receive Chriſt and his Word freely, ſeeing he will receive you ſo freely another day? He won't be aſhamed to take his people and to own them before all the world, theſe are mine, my Jewels: and if Chriſt won't be aſhamed of you, oh what a ſhame is it that you ſhould either be aſhamed or afraid to receive him and his Word, and his Truth, and

to

to hold it forth in a time of oppoſition and ſuffering The free-grace of God in receiving his people at laſt, is a mighty engagement unto them, now to receive Chriſt, and every word of Chriſt, whilſt they are in this Pilgrimage, where God hath ſet them to bear up his name in the world. But,

Further, *God took Enoch:* When was *Enoch* taken? When he had lived three hundred ſixty and five years, that you find in the Chapter to be the term of his life, three hundred ſixty and five years: if you compare the years of *Enoch* with the years of others, of the holy men that lived in that Generation, you ſhall find his life exceeding ſhort; his father lived above nine hundred and ſixty years, and his ſon *Mathuſalem* lived longer; yea, all the time of all the Patriarchs (there) in this Chapter, even amongſt them all, *Enoch* was the ſhorteſt liver: a holy man, a gracious man, and one that was moſt eminent in his Generation, and none there was that walked with God in his Generation as *Enoch* did, and yet *Enoch*'s daies are ſhortened; I ſay, ſometimes the Lord ſhortens the daies of his Children, that have walked and lived with him in an abundance of love and mercy.

You will ſay, What time is that? and when is it a mercy? When does God ſhorten the daies of his ſervants in love?

1. Firſt of all, God hath ſome of his ſervants that lie under great preſſures, their combatings are extraordinary, and ſometimes he ſhortens the term of their life in mercy and love. We ſhall conſider thoſe particular combats which ſome of the Lords people are in an extraordinary manner exerciſed with, and ſometimes in pity, mercy and love the Lord ſhortens their daies on earth. As,

1. First, There is some of Gods servants that have extraordinary warrings with corruptions within them, I say, with corruptions within them, and this proves a most heavy burden to them, and makes their very lives uncomfortable, a continual burden to them: Oh, these daughters of *Heth* were a continual vexation unto *Rebecca*; the Apostle *Paul* was a man able to bear much, and he bore a great deal of affliction which he met withal in his Pilgrimage, that he could rejoice in afflictions, and glory in tribulations, they were nothing to him: but when he comes to combate with sin, lust and corruption that was within him, he was forc'd to cry out, to cry out for help; he could rejoice in other affliction, but herein he could not rejoice, *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* I say, some have extraordinary combatings with corruption more than others; Oh these Monsters! as soon as one head is cut off another springs up in the room, never at peace, the war is never at an end: the Lord shortens their warfare in that.

2. Again, Secondly, God hath some of his servants that are extraordinarily imployed with temptation; oh they are hunted up and down, and continually baited, baited with Satans most horrible temptations: winds and storms are ever beating, fiery darts are ever thrown in; before one wound is healed another is given: Well, the Lord looks out from Heaven, he looks down, he sees the combate, and many times he makes this the way of deliverance, he puts out his hand, he takes his poor servants to himself, and so delivers them from the baitings of Satans temptations.

3. Again, Thirdly, Some of Gods servants are in extraordinary afflictions all their dayes, above all the men in the world they are most afflicted; I say, the way that God leads some of his servants to heaven, is a very

very dark and narrow lane, and they see more affliction than all their Neighbours: in *Iam.* 3 1. well saies the Prophet there, *I am the man that have seen affliction*; *I am the man that have seen affliction*, that's no great matter, who hath not seen affliction? Is that such a matter for the Prophet to complain of, that he had seen affliction? Ay, but his portion was extraordinary, he had seen more than all others in his time, and therefore complains as if he alone had been the man that had seen affliction; Well, when afflictions are very great and of long continuance, God hath trained up some of his servants in this way in this School; yea, he many times shortens their journey in love. But you will say,

Object. Could not God deliver them some other way? Could not God rescue them out of the hands of affliction, and deliver them from temptation, and make them conquerours over their lusts and corruptions? But must he shorten their lives by it, and no other way?

Answ. Why Beloved, we must know this, the Lord sees it best, and he knows it is needful for them to come to him in this narrow way, and they could not be without those afflictions and warrings of lusts, and without those temptations, and it's the best way, infinite wisdom sees it the best way to lead them to himself, and to glory: And therefore when the case is thus, that the Lord sees it so needful, that so long as they are in the body, they should be in these conflicts, afflictions, and temptations, then the Lord (sometimes) sees it best to shorten some of their daies to bring them unto himself. But you must take this caution; Take heed you don't limit the Lord to this way, for though God doth take many of his servants this way by death, yet, I say, they ought not to limit the holy one of *Israel.*

Let not them say as *Job*, *Wherefore is life given to a man that is in affliction? Wherefore is life given to a man whose way is hid?* For if God continues life in afflicted conditions, he sees good reason for it: and therefore, I say, you may not absolutely desire death because of your affliction, because of your temptations, because of your buffettings; not absolutely to limit God in this way of deliverance, for though God doth use this way many times, yet he will not be confined to it.

And though the Lord doth keep you in affliction, he sees it is for his honour, it is for his own glory; that he may shew his power and goodness, his wisdom in directing you, his power in supporting you, in strengthening you, in delivering you, and in making you able to hold out in such difficult afflicted conditions: the Lord can find many waies of deliverance; therefore don't say you, *Lord, take away my life, my affliction is great*, I see no way how I shall come out of it; this is sinful: for God hath many waies, I say, God chooses this way sometimes to free his people from all their corruption and temptations, he shortens their lives, and that in abundance of love.

2. Again, Secondly, God sometimes doth shorten the daies of his servants in love, when they live in evil times, times in which iniquity doth abound, then God fetches home many of his servants in love: It was a very corrupt time that *Enoch* lived in, *The world was corrupt and filled with violence*, and therefore it was in love to *Enoch* that God shortened his course: the Lord knows how afflictive it is, for his servants to live in an evil world, *Wo is me*, saies the Psalmist, *that I am constrained to sojourn in Mesech, and to dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, Psal. 120 5. That righteous soul was vexed, *Wo is me*, &c. Nay, the Lord considers

that

that possibly his own people may be carried down the stream through the strength and violence of the corruption of the times, that they may be drawn aside from their stedfastness, it's possible that even they may be corrupted, even Gods own people may be corrupted, in a corrupt Generation: the Lord considers this, and therefore many times he takes them away in an abundance of love and mercy. When the Thistles and Nettles do so inclose the Lilies, that they hinder their growth, and communicate of their ill savour unto them, then the Lord sees it's high time to remove, to transplant his Lilies into a better soil. And that's a second Particular why the Lord doth shorten the daies of his servants, it is when they live in a very corrupt and sinful Generation, that doth both affl & them and endanger them.

3. Again, Thirdly, Sometimes God shortens the daies of his servants in love; that they may not see when great desolations are coming, either upon their friends, their relations, their families, or upon the Kingdom they live in: the Lord in mercy calls home those that do walk faithfully with him: and thus it was with *Jeroboam*'s child in 1 *Kings* 14. 13. *Jeroboam*'s child was taken away, you have the reason given there, because great desolation is coming upon the Family, God threatens there by the Prophet, that he would not leave one person alive, and this child shall go to his Grave in peace, *Because some good thing was found in him towards the Lord God of Israel*; some good thing was found in him when the family was corrupt, and therefore God would not have him to see what desolation he would bring upon the family: And so when God brings desolation upon Kingdoms and Nations, he sometimes calls home his own people. Good King *Josiah*, a gracious man, was cut off be-

times,

times, because the Lord was about to bring desolation upon *Judah:* a great and fearful Captivity which came presently after, when he was gone; but he feared the Lord, and was fearful when the Word of the Lord came to him, and therefore God took him that he might not see that desolation with his eyes, that sad desolation, that God would bring upon *Judah.* And so saies the Prophet, *Isa.* 57. 1. he gives this as a reason why God takes away some of his servants betimes, *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and the merciful man is taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come:* When evil and desolation is about to come upon a place or a Kingdom, why then God takes away many righteous and merciful men. The Husbandman, when he sees a storm is a coming, he makes haste to gather in his Corn, especially, that which is most ready to shake, that which is most like to take harm by the wet, that he'll in withall: And thus the Lord doth with his, when he sees great desolation, that may even shake those that are his own.

4. Fourthly, God takes way some of his servants that he may prevent their uneven walking, and their declining and turning aside from him: the Lord loves to take his servants when they are at the best, he pulls the Rose when it's most sweet: sometimes the Lord sees many of his servants, that if they should stand longer they would decline and grow worse; sad experience doth teach it; now therefore it is that the Lord takes them at the fit time, that he may prevent that dishonour, that otherwise might be brought to his name, if he should suffer them to stand longer in the world, they might happily blurr their profession, they might dishonour God, they might harden their own hearts; and therefore the Lord loves to take them when they

are

are fully ripe: and when he sees such a one ready to decline and grow worse, and to lose of his sweetness, and of his savour, it may blurr the name of God, dishonour him in the world; why, the Lord to prevent all this, takes away sometimes such a servant of his in abundance of love and mercy: and so he took away *Asa*, and so *Jehosaphat*, they were good men, but they began to decline in their old daies; *Asa* was a good man, his heart was perfect, it is the Testimony that God gives of him, all his daies; but he went and declined, he went and relied on the arm of flesh: when the Prophet tells him of it, he was angry with the Prophet, he imprisons the Prophet, and he began to smite the people, and God smites *Asa* with a disease in his feet, and so took him away; and it was best for *Asa* that he was taken away before a further declining: and so *Jehosaphat*, did take part with a wicked King, and the Lord did shorten his daies in abundance of love.

5. Again Fifthly, God will shorten the daies of his servants, when they are enabled to do much in a little time; when he hath caused them to run amain after himself, to follow him hard, and so through his grace have done the work of their Generation in a little time, then the Lord shortens the daies of their dwelling in the body in abundance of love: when their work is done, the sooner their work is done, the sooner they are at rest; the Lord will not keep his people longer from their rest than needs must, he knows that their daies are as the daies of an Hireling, as *Job* speaks, full of labour, full of toyl, and full of trouble, full of disquietness and hurryings, no rest; therefore so soon as ever they have done their work, God takes them; he loves to have his children bettered, he won't put them to School longer than needs must, when he hath trained them up for heaven, he presently sends for them home.

home, he hath longing desires to see them : Christ would have all his children round about him, and therefore when he hath caused them to do his work in a little time, he will then send for them, *That where I am, you may be also ; I am gone to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you to glory.* It shews how the Lord Christ doth hasten, he hath longing desires to see them, I am gone away, and I come again as soon as ever the work is done, he will not stay a minute when he hath fitted glory for them, and fitted them for glory, *I will come* ; I'le come again and take you to my self, he longs for them, and causes their hearts also to be breathing mightily after him ; and therefore they shall not be absent from the Lord longer than needs must, but when he hath caused them to do the work of their Generation, he will take them away in abundance of love and mercy. There are some Objections to Answer, as concerning long life as a blessing, but so much for this time.

SER-

SERMON XI.

GEN. 5. 24.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

HE *was not, for God took him.* I opened the phrase to you the last day, God took him to Communion with himself, to near Communion; the Saints whilst in the body are at a distance from God, *Whilst we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord*, saith the Apostle; though God do now and then visit them, yet for the most part they are absent from God: they are put out to School, and here God will have his people trained up for Heaven, but when that change comes which is spoken of, why then, God is said to take them, he takes them home, he takes them into nigheſt fellowship and communion with himself: *For God took him*; the phrase holds forth that fulness of glory which the Saints are translated out of this world into; God dwells here in them, but they dwell in God; they here are depressed in their spirits through the weight of corruption; it't but a little they are able to hold of God; Ay, but in Heaven there God takes them, he takes

takes them in to himself, *Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Master, enter into it*; they shall be as so many vessels that are cast into fulness of love, life and glory, they shall be filled full to the brim: *God took him.* It holds forth also the freeness of grace in receiving in any; even the best must enter in at this door of free-grace, and no otherwise: though *Enoch* had walked with God so many years, three hundred sixty and five, yet it's free-grace if God will receive *Enoch* at last; there are so many slips, so many failings, there are so many declinings, so many turnings aside, there is so much crookedness in the walks of the best of the Saints, that if God should deal with them in the rigour of his Justice, he might refuse them; and therefore it's grace, it's free-grace that they are received, there's no other door they are to enter in at. I also considered (the last time) *when* it was that *Enoch* was taken, when did God take him? After he had lived three hundred sixty and five years, which was a short time, a very short time in that Age, when the Patriarchs lived seven hundred, eight hundred, nine hundred, almost a thousand years; *Enoch* a gracious man, one that walked with God, and yet he lived not half the years of those Generations, and of his son that came after him: God many times shortens the daies of his servants in love. I told you what are those times in which he shortens the daies of his servants in love and mercy.

1. First, When their lives are full of extraordinary warrings, when more than ordinary burdens are laid upon them: some have fiercer combatings with Satans temptations than others, and some have heavier burdens both of corruptions, and of afflictions than others, *I am a man that have seen affliction*, saies *Jeremiah*; as if none besides him had seen affliction;

now

now many times God shortens the daies of his servants in love, when their combatings have been extraordinary with corruptions and temptations, and the burden of their affliction heavy; it's true, the Lord could deliver them some other way, open some other way besides the door of the Grave, he could make them conquerours: but the Lord in wisdom sees it best for some of his servants, so long as they are in the body; in this condition it's needful for them so long as they are in the body to be grappling with their corruptions and temptations, fightings and buffetings; and therefore you ought not to call for death because of your afflictions, and because of your temptations, for the Lord is pleased many times in wisdom, to take this way to bring in full deliverance to his servants. And,

2. Secondly, When his servants live in a very evil time, in a corrupt Generation, then the Lord is pleased to shorten the daies of his servants in love: It was a corrupt time that *Enoch* lived in; before the Flood the earth was degenerated, and violence covered the face of the earth before the Flood came, and then it was mercy for *Enoch* to be taken away betimes; the Lord knows what a burden it is for his servants to live at such a time when wickedness abounds, and so the Lord delivers many of his servants by shortening of their course. Again,

3. Thirdly, When great Judgements are coming upon them, either upon their Families, or upon the Kingdom and place that they live in, God hath then (sometimes) shortened the daies of his servants: as God when he intended to bring destruction upon *Jeroboam's* Family, then cut short the daies of one of his Children, *Because some good thing was found in him towards the Lord God of Israel*; God cut them off every man, but he went to his grave

in

in peace, that he might not see that desolation: and so good *Josiah*, when he was young, the Lord was pleased to take away him, because of that Captivity which presently came upon the Jews after his being taken away. And,

4. Again, Fourthly, The Lord doth shorten the daies of his servants, not because the seed of Faith should perish, that doth abide for ever: *I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not*; Ay, but the actings of their Faith may decline, and Christians may grow dead, and lose their first love, may fall off, and they may fall into Scandals, and a blurr to their Conscience and profession; now many times, the Lord to prevent this doth shorten the daies of some of his servants: As I gave Instances of King *Jehosaphat*; and *Asa* began to imprison and to oppose, and he might have done a great deal of evil, but God smites him with a disease in his feet, and he died, and it was in love to his soul. But again,

5. Fifthly, God loves his servants, and therefore when they have done much in a little time, and long for his appearance, *O! when shall I come and appear before thee?* So he calls alike for them, he hath longing desires to see them; when they have done the work of their Generation, he will take them to himself in abundance of love and mercy.

Object. But you will say, Is not long life a blessing? Hath not God promised to give long life to his servants, in *Prov.* 10. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth daies*; and so see what *Job* saies, *Job* 5. 27. *Thou shalt come to thy Grave in a full age, like to a Shock of Corn brought in in good season*: Now how is this promise made good, that God takes away some of his servants in the midst of their daies? How then do they come to the fulness of their daies as in age, as a Shock of

Corn

Corn in its full season? To this I may answer in divers things, which you may lay up for your satisfaction.

1. First of all, This may seem to be an Old Testament Promise, the Promise of the Old Testament or Old Covenant; for before the coming of Jesus Christ, God walked more in this way of temporal promises, and temporal blessings; and happily though there may come a time again when God shall walk in this way, and give out both temporal and spiritual, yet now Gods present dispensation since the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, it's more spiritual, he gives out more spirituals and less of temporals, he gives out more of his own glory which he hath pleased to reveal in and through Jesus Christ, and that which he gives out now unto his servants in spirituals, may abundantly recompence the absence of all temporal mercies whatsoever. But,

2. Again, Secondly, That these Promises are conditional; all outward promises, promises of riches and honour, of health and children, and promises of long life, these are all conditional, God hath not promised them absolutely, but with this limitation, so far as he in infinite wisdom and fatherly love and care, shall see to be good for them; so far the Lord will fulfill any, yea all those temporal promises which are given out, so far as the Lord shall see to be good for them; and therefore if the Lord doth take away his servants, any of his servants betimes in the midst of their daies, and don't give out these blessings of long life, it's because the Lords sees it's best for them: they are strangers here, and it's not good for them that they should be long from home; he sees it in his wisdom, I say, to be best for them, because their daies are evil, it's mercy that their daies are few: God in wisdom put both these together, few and evil; saies old *Jacob* in *Gen.* 47. 9. *Few and evil have the daies of the years*

of my life been, and I have not attained unto the daies of the years of the life of my Fathers, in the daies of their Pilgrimage : few and evil; the Lord sees it's good that they should be few, because they are evil. In *Job* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few daies and full of trouble*; what a mercy is it that God hath put these together, *few daies and full of trouble!* he is full of trouble, trouble from within, and trouble from without; he is troubled with corruption, temptation, affliction, with the sin of others, with the dishonour that is brought to God in the world: now when he is full of trouble, it's mercy that his daies are few. That's a second Answer.

3. But again, Thirdly, I must say to that Objection concerning the promise of long life to the Saints, that this promise is made good to a gracious man or woman; when God takes them away they are full of daies, he shall die in a full age, saies *Job*, *Full of daies*; why, a gracious man is full of daies, because he is full of grace: he is full of holiness, and goodness, and therefore he hath filled up his daies. A wicked man when God cuts him off, he is never full of daies, in this respect his daies are empty, his daies are full of vanity, full of sin, they are spent as a shadow; but a gracious man is full of goodness, he is fully ripe, he is ripe for heaven, he is ripe for the grave at that time when God cuts him down, for he is Gods Husbandry, God won't cut down his Corn before it be ripe, if he cut off betimes, he ripens betimes, he will cause them to fulfill their daies, God will fill their daies full of grace and holiness.

4. Again, Fourthly, We may see that this promise is made good, for a gracious man hath enough of life, when God calls him to die he hath enough of life; so that he is not taken away before his time, why, because

cause he hath enough of life: *It is enough*, saies the Prophet, *Lord it is enough, therefore take me away; I am no better than my Fathers*; even so God causeth his people to say, though he takes them away betimes, yet they will all say, *Lord it is enough*, I have enough of life, I have enough of the world, I see nothing desirable here, nothing that may provoke me to live longer here, and therefore if the Lord say, *It is enough*, he'll say it's enough too. But this won't the wicked man, he will never say he hath enough: let him live an hundred years, twice, thrice told, yet he'll never have enough: the righteous come to the Grave, but the wicked is dragg'd and haled to his Grave, he is not a Volunteer to his Grave. And therefore here is the promise made good, if God satisfie the hearts of his people, and enable them to say, Lord I have enough, enough of the world here, and if thou pleasest to expire my daies, I can say, I have enough, I have enough.

5. Fifthly, Again, The time of the full accomplishment of this promise of long life to be given out is not yet come; there's a day when it shall be given out, when it shall be mercy to live long, when God shall give out long life: there seems to be such a thing spoken of; it is Prophesied by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Isa.* 65. 22. this Prophecie relates to the end of the world, the latter daies when there shall be a great restauration of the world, and of all things, they shall not be cut off in the midst of their daies as formerly; saies God, *They shall not build, and another inhabit they shall not build houses, and be cut off before they can build; they shall not plant, and another eat, for as the daies of a tree, are the daies of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands:* they shall be as the long-liv'd Oaks; this promise God will fulfil before

the end, and it shall be a mercy then to live long; when the new *Jerusalem* shall come down from heaven, and when the *Lamb* shall be the light of the new *Jerusalem*, when Satan shall be bound, and shall not seduce the Nations, and tempt them, and when all enemies shall be put under the souls of their feet, when *Jerusalem* shall be a peaceable habitation, and a quiet resting place, when there shall be peace upon *Israel*, then long life shall be a blessing.

6. Sixthly and lastly, When God will fulfil this, it shall be a time of the accomplishment of the promises, in that God gives life and length of daies, *even for ever and ever*; there is the accomplishment of the promise, and therefore God is not behind-hand concerning this promise, if he promise long life on earth, and give an eternity of life in heaven, the creature is no loser; if a man shall promise you a shilling, and when he comes to pay, he shall give you a thousand pounds, will not you say this man is as good as his word? The Lord hath promised a long time on earth, and an eternity in heaven, you may well say it of him who is truth it self, that he will fulfil and make good his word: and therefore notwithstanding what may be objected, yet still it's true, it's not against the promise; but God may in love and mercy shorten the daies of his people.

What shall we learn from this, God shortens the daies of his servants in love? It will be useful to us divers waies. Why,

Use 1. First of all, It lets us see that life and death is in the hand of God; God shortens, *God took him*, I say, life and death is in the hand of God, it's not in the hand of any creature whatsoever, *My times are in thy hand*, saies *David*, and *He that is our God is the God of Salvation, and to him belong the issues of Death*: Enemies think that it is in their power to harm

or

or to cut off; *Laban* thought it in his power to cut off *Jacob*; but he was deceived, it's in the hand of no creature to cut off the time of Gods servants, but at the appointment of the Lord; and God doth it in love, when he cuts short the time of his servants, it's in love; if any wicked man shall attempt any thing against the lives of his servants, that's from the malice of Hell, which God will avenge; and if any man shall attempt against his own life, that is not without horrible sin, for though God can cut short in love, yet if thou dost cut short thine own life, it's not without horrible sin; though indeed when God shortens, it's alwaies in love: for what's the creature? Ah poor creature, a worm, that he should step up in the seat of God, and should pluck the issues of life and death out of the hand of God, which God doth challenge in a peculiar manner as his right. That's the first.

Use 2. Secondly, It may teach us, that though God cut short the time of his servants in love, yet he may cut short the time of many in wrath, in abundance of wrath: when his own people are ripe for heaven, he reaps them; and when wicked men are ripe for destruction, the Lord also cuts them down. In *Psal.* 55. 23. it's said there of wicked men, *That blood-thirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their daies*; God will cut them off in wrath: they shall live out those daies that God hath determined, yet they shall not live out half their daies in the course of nature that they might have done: and therefore see what *Solomon* saies in *Eccles.* 7. 17. *Be not thou over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish, why shouldst thou die before thy time:* wickedness brings men to end their time before the course of nature be extinct; Oh, that wicked men would think of this; it would be very sad if their own hands should be upon them-

selves to bring them down: though it is mercy to the Saints at some times to be taken away early, yet when wicked men are cut off in the midst of their daies, it is not without a great deal of displeasure and wrath of God. That's a second.

Use 3. Thirdly, This may teach us this Instruction, If God deal thus with his own people, what shall be the portion of the wicked? If this be done to the green tree, what shall become of the dry? If God cut off young Saints, what shall become of old sinners? Oh! that the hear-say of this dispensation might convince some, and move them to awake, and say, *Come let us eat and drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and more abundant:* Why do you put off the thoughts of God and Eternity to old age, and speak of returning to God another time? when thou knowest not what a day may bring forth, thou knowest not what may lie in the womb of to morrow; God cuts off sometimes some of his people in the midst of their daies, and what shall become of you? I shall speak only to you in the words of the Apostle *James*, *Jam.* 4 13. and the Lord set them home to your hearts, *Go to now, ye that say To day or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain: whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life?* He shews the vanity of the cares of this life, and of wicked worldly men; they dream of a long time, of a continuance, and we will stay there a year; *A year*, saies he? thou knowest not what to morrow may bring forth; thou saiest, *Stay, we will heap goods up*, and *what knowest thou, O fool, but this night thy soul may be taken away?* Oh! that men, wicked men, and worldly men would look to themselves, and not promise to themselves time for hereafter; and if this be done

done to the green tree, what will be done to the dry? But again,

Use 4. Fourthly, This may be a ground of patience unto the servants of God in the midst of all their affliction; in the midst of all temptations and afflictions whatsoever; possess your souls in patience; Why? because the time is short, and if it be good for you, the Lord will make your daies few, because they are evil; therefore possess your souls in patience: you complain of your afflictions; Why? they are not for an Eternity, a few daies, those daies are shortened, if you should live as long as they did before the Flood, seven, eight or nine hundred years, and all the time be tempted and afflicted; but now for the Elects sake, those daies are shortened: your burden is but for a little time, your rest is long, therefore possess your souls with patience; O the wisdom and goodness of God in walking in this way, to and with his people! if your afflictions had been heavy and long too, that had been sad: It is the misery of Hell, heavy burdens to Eternity is the misery of Hell; Ay, but Gods dispensation to you is quite contrary, and otherwise; when your daies are evil they shall be few, and but for a little while, but when joy comes, that shall be for Eternity; O the goodness of Gods dispensation! few daies when they are evil, and an Eternity of daies when entering into the possession of Joy: possess your souls with patience.

5. Fifthly, Again, Will God cut off the times of his best servants? See and take that Counsel in *Isa.* 2.22. *Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Cease ye from man, from the best of men, for their breath is in their nostrils: Cease from affecting them over much, do not let the stream of your affections be

any way inordinate, for wherein are they to be accounted? Remember what the Apostle saies, *The time is short, the fashion of this world passeth away*: when he goes about to other things concerning this world, *The time is short*, saies he, *cease ye from man*, and cease from trusting in him, *his breath is in his nostrils*; don't lay too much weight upon any man, the Lord cuts short the daies of the best of his servants; therefore trust not in, don't lay too much weight upon them, don't say the comfort of your lives is bound up in them, and you can't live comfortably without them: oh, cease ye from trusting in man, it's much better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man: by laying weight upon the creature you may break the creature; therefore take heed, though God may take away them that you trust in, in love and mercy, he may shorten their daies in love, yet cease ye from trusting in man. That's a fifth. Again,

Use 6. Sixthly, This may teach you to take heed of murmuring and repining when God takes away any of your relations in the midst of their years and daies; Oh, how full of carnal reasonings are they? Oh, you conceive it much better if they had lived longer, if they had lived to mans age; what an honour might they have been to God, and a comfort to you if they had lived longer? These are carnal reasonings that arise from the flesh; know assuredly that if God shortened their daies it was in love, it was best for them that they were so taken away, taken away at that time: why will you teach God? Will you teach God to gather in his Corn, in what season he shall do it? Know assuredly he will take them at the best, he will crop them at the best season, he loves his servants well, and he will put them off at the best advantage, both in life and death: and therefore know assuredly that whatsoever

carnal

carnal reason may say on the contrary, it was according to the dispensation of Gods love, though he takes them away in the midst of their daies. That's a sixth.

Use 7. Seventhly, It may be a word of conviction to such as have lived long, and have lost of their former forwardness and zeal for God, such as have lived to grow worse; lived to be scandalous to the name of God, and to a holy profession; Oh, my friends, what shall we say? But that God orders things in infinite wisdom, you might say, poor creature, how much better had it been if God had taken you away before! Oh! to live to be a dishonour to God, to live to lose thy first love, and thy first zeal and forwardness for God, to be a scandal to profession, oh better that you had been taken away at the first, better that you had been hid in the Grave many years ago, that now your corruption should be discovered to the dishonour of your profession! and yet don't you say, there is no hope, and therefore we will wait no longer; the Lord invites you to return; return; oh that you would seek after your first love, and first zeal: strengthen the feeble hands and knees; if the Lord should come and take you away whilst you are in this condition, oh how uncomfortable will it be unto you, very uncomfortable! you lose your Crown; though I know (if you have interest in Christ) the Crown of glory is safe, yet there is a Crown which you will lose, if you return not speedily to the Lord; the Crown of a Christian is to flourish green, and be fruitful in old age, fat and flourishing in the Courts of the Lord; to be fresh and sweet, and to send forth an excellent savour, this is the Crown of a Christian, and this Crown you may lose, if death comes upon you whilst you are in that declining condition. Oh, therefore make haste to the Lord, pour out your cry continually that the Lord would be pleased to restore

restore you again, and to establish you with his free spirit, that you may be fresh, fruitful and sweet, and may not be withered in time of gathering, when God shall come to pull and gather you; if you be dead and withered, you lose all your sweet scent. Oh, beg of the Lord that you may not be in that condition at that time when he shall come to gather you into his Barn. That's a seventh.

Use 8. Eightly, Let us pray and wait for that time which before was spoken of, when there shall be no danger in long life, when long life shall be a mercy unto all the Saints, when the daies of the Lords people shall be as the daies of a tree, and the Elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands; Oh, pray for the accomplishment of that promise, it will be very sweet: how much shall the Saints gain at that time, how much knowledge? yea, how much shall they do for God? Alas! we are of yesterday, and know nothing; oh get large experience, renewed experience: they shall grow in that day like an Oak tree, or a Cedar; there shall be no hindrances of growth; pray and wait for the accomplishment of that.

Use 9. Ninthly, This may support against the extream of a short life, and a long uncomfortable; Oh, saies the soul, I am pressing after the Lord, and breathing after him, and this is my fear, I shall be cut off before his work be done in me.

Fear it not, the Lord will not cut off the daies of his servants but in love; if it be not for thy good, it shall not come unto thee: Old *Simeon* waited for the consolations of *Israel*, he might have many discouragements, what hopes had he to see Christ when he had one foot in the Grave? And yet at last he saw Christ the hope of his Salvation. But they may think if they should live, they should live to decay in profession, and

and to go backward; Oh fear not, *I am perswaded, neither things present, nor things to come*, even old age, *shall separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus:* Though God do send for some of his servants, it's no argument that he don't love you though you live long; *Mathusalem* lived nine hundred years, the rest of the Patriarchs were holy men as well as others. That's a Ninth.

Use 10. Tenthly, This may teach to covet to desire to live much, rather than to live long: Oh, labour to do much for God while ye live, to do much for God in the service of your Generation; *What ever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might*; labour to redeem time, and take all seasons, and all opportunities of getting nigher God; Oh, lose no opportunity, lose no part of precious time: A Heathen could say, *There's no time past, but there's something is worth the writing*; let no part of your precious time be waste and nothing done; time is short, and therefore you had need live every part of time, live every hour, and live every moment; rather covet to live much than long: Oh, labour for an eternal life, this life is short, in a moment God shortens the time of the best of his servants; and therefore if this time be short, oh labour for an eternal life; and do what you do for God, with all your might, and with all your strength. He is an unwise man that will protract time, that will do that in a year which he might do in a day; Oh, covet much, you have a pattern of the Lord Jesus Christ, he lived not long on earth, but he did much in a little time, he wrought whilst it was day, he knew the night was coming; Christ did so, and Satan doth so, he knows his time is short, and he bestirs himself, he knows it must be now or never: if Satan be thus wise for his Kingdom, shall not we that profess our selves to be Christs,

Christs, be thus wise in the matters of his Kingdom? Here is all the time you have to work in, oh you have no more working daies, work apace for God, for in the end of the six daies of this life there's a rest a coming; there's no work beyond the Grave, either in heaven or in hell; you that are Christs, you shall not work after this life is at an end, your rest comes then; yea, that's the time of your sitting down, this is the time of your walking, not the time of your rest; and seeing you have no more time to eternity to work in, there's no more working daies, be content to work now, be earnestly desirous to do all you can to lift up God and Christ, and his Kingdom, whilst you are on earth; for what know you, your time is short, and what know you, but that you may live even as *Enoch*, whose life was but half the daies of the rest of the Patriarchs? Thus I have shewn you at what time *Enoch* was taken, at three hundred sixty and five years: It remains further to enquire, Wherefore did God take *Enoch* away, and why he did take him away at that time? and wherefore *Enoch* was taken in that extraordinary way, both soul and body to Heaven?

SER-

SERMON XII.

GEN. 5. the latter end of the 24 Verse.

———*And he was not, for God took him.*

I Shewed you the last day at what time God took *Enoch*, it was when he had not attained to half the years of the rest of that Generation. God sometimes shortens the daies of his own servants in Love. I answered an Objection the last day.

Object. Is not long life promised as a blessing to the Saints? *Thou shalt come to thy Grave in a full age, as a Shock of Corn in its season*; How is this promise made good, when God takes away some of his people before they have attained to half their daies, that they might have lived unto in the course of nature? I answered in many things.

Answ. 1. First, That this is an Old Testament promise: God walked then in a way of temporal promises more than now in this dispensation under the Gospel in which he gives out less temporals, and more spirituals. Besides, I told you it was a conditional promise; as in all the promises of outward good things that are made to Gods people, the promises of health, strength, riches, and honour, and of long life: they must

must be taken with this limitation; so far as God in infinite wisdom shall see to be best for them, so far shall he give out to them; and therefore if God do take away any of his people at any time, it is because God sees it best for them to be taken home to himself, it is best for them to have a short time, because that their daies are evil, *Man that is born of a woman*, saies *Job*, *is one of few daies, and full of trouble*; and there is a mercy that both these go together, *few of daies and full of trouble*. Besides I answered, That the promise is made good, though God do take away some of his people whilst young, yet the promise is made good; they come to the Grave in full age, because they come to the Grave full of grace, he is not cut down before he is ripe, they are not like the Corn on the house top that is burnt up before it is ripe, but God can make them full of grace, which is a full age; and herein his promise is made good. Besides, his promise is made good, because God makes them willing to leave the world when he calls for them: the righteous man when God calls for him, he saies as *Elias* said, *Lord it is enough*, if thou saiest it is enough that I have lived so long upon earth, I will say so too, Lord I have enough of living here, I have enough of this world, here's nothing that is desirable, or that may draw forth my affection to live longer, if this be the determined time of God. A wicked man hath never life enough, though he liveth a hundred years, twice told, yet he is as greedy to live longer, as at first; but God satisfies the hearts of his servants, in that they have lived long enough, and their time is come, and that satisfies them; and thus they have length of daies continued. And besides, God doth promise to his people a great restauration that is to be before the end of the world: as the daies of a tree, so shall the daies of my servants be,

and

and mine Elect they shall long enjoy the work of their hands; it shall then be a mercy to live long, when the new *Jerusalem* shall come down from heaven, and when the Lamb shall be the light of it, when Satan shall be bound, and the Accuser of the Brethren cast out, and wicked men put under, when corruption shall be subdued, then long life shall be a mercy. But however I answer, That if God do shorten our daies here and give us an Eternity in heaven, we are no losers, but God is as good as his word. If a man promise you a Shilling, and shall at that day give you a hundred or a thousand pounds, he is not unfaithful, but he is as good as his word; and thus the Lord promised long life, which is an eternity, better than life here, and wherein he fulfils his word. It should and ought to be the desire of all to live much, rather than to live long, to live much in a little time; thus did Christ, he lived much, he glorified the name of his Father in the time he lived, he did much in a little time; and thus it should be our care, to do much for God in a little time, and to lay hold of eternal life betimes; because this life is momentany and vanishing; the Devil takes his opportunity, he works much, knowing he hath but a little time, because he knows his time is short, therefore he works with all his might, and plyes his work to deceive the Nations.

If he be so subtile for his Kingdom, how wise ought we to be to promote the Kingdom of Christ? Oh! whatsoever we find to do for God, let us do it with all our might, and with all our strength; for thus hath Christ given us his Example. I shall proceed to that which remains, *God took him.*

I shewed you before, Whither *Enoch* was taken: He was taken up into Heaven, he was not dissolved, he died not as other men; I proved it from the Epi-

stle

ſtle to the *Hebrews*, that he was *tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death.*

Queſt. But you will ſay, Wherefore was *Enoch* thus *tranſlated?* Why was he not diſſolved? Why died he not as others? Why tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death?

Anſw. I anſwer, Firſt, Becauſe he was a remarkable Type of Jeſus Chriſt; I ſay, he was a remarkable Type of Chriſt. For,

1. Firſt, He was matchleſs in his Generation, *There was none like him*, above all the men in the world *Enoch* walk'd moſt cloſe with God in his time, he was matchleſs and none like him, and herein he wa a Type of Jeſus Chriſt, who was matchleſs in the world; whilſt he was in the world, he was as the *Apple-tree in the midſt of the Trees in the Foreſt, there was no guile found in his mouth*; he walked exactly with God when he was here upon earth, there was no ſtumbling blocks, no ſlips in the whole courſe of Jeſus Chriſt. But,

2. Secondly, *Enoch* was a Type of Chriſt, in that God was ſo exceedingly *well pleaſed* with him; *He received this Teſtimony*, ſaies the Apoſtle in *Heb.* 11. 5. that *he pleaſed God*; God was pleaſed with him, and herein he was a notable Type of Chriſt: the Father is p'eaſed only in him, *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold*, ſaies he in *Iſa.* 42. 1. *mine Elect in whom my ſoul delighteth:* he was infinitely well pleaſed with Chriſt; the good pleaſure of God towards *Enoch*, it was but a drop of that love, and that good pleaſure which was poured out upon the head of Jeſus Chriſt; the Father was pleaſed with his Perſon, infinitely pleaſed in his righteouſneſs, pleaſed in all that he did, and pleaſed in his ſufferings, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *It pleaſed the Father to bruiſe him*; he was pleaſed with all thoſe that Chriſt repreſented, he is pleaſed with the whole Family of Chriſt,

Christ, even with all that belong unto him in Heaven and Earth, and that only for his sake; it is said of him in *Matth.* 3. the latter end, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* So then my Brethren, is there ever a soul that is seeking after the good pleasure of God? the manifestation of the love of God unto it? that is looking and waiting for some token of acceptance from heaven? Would you be in the ready way unto it? Then look unto the Lord, even Jesus Christ, of whom *Enoch* was a Type, look unto him in his love, all the love and all the good pleasure that is in the heart of God, runs down through Jesus Christ unto poor creatures: Oh, run to Christ, make haste to Christ, throw down your selves at the Foot-stool of Christ, and clasp about him by Faith, and know that there is a plentiful Box of good pleasure and love broken upon the head of Christ by the Father, that will run down unto every soul that sits under the skirt and shadow of Christ. That's a Second thing, wherein *Enoch* was a Type of Christ.

3. Thirdly, *Enoch* was a Type of Christ, as Christ was a Conqueror over *Death*; and this was held forth in *Enoch's* translation, *He did not see Death*; *Enoch* did not see corruption as the bodies of others do, and he was in this a Type of Jesus Christ, that was the holy One of God, that he should not see corruption; he did not see corruption; *Enoch's* conquest was but a Type of this conquest and victory of Jesus Christ, that he got for his people over Death and the Grave: and therefore you that desire not to be dismayed when Death comes, when this enemy shall set upon you; Oh, that you would before-hand look unto the conquest and victory of Christ. There is a time when this your enemy will meet you all in the Field: Would you not be dismayed? Would you be able to look Death in the

face? Then I beseech you, before-hand, live upon Faith in Christ, upon the conquest of Christ, upon the victory of Christ, he hath broken the force of death, taken away the sting of it, he hath dismayed it. Oh, live upon the conquest that Christ hath made over death, that so your hearts may not fail when you come to grapple with this last enemy, which is Death, Christ hath overcome Death gloriously; and *Enoch* was but a Type of Christ, and a shadow of it in his translation. That's the first, wherefore *Enoch* was translated in an extraordinary way, because he was an extraordinary Type of Christ.

2. But Secondly, *Enoch* was thus translated, because *Enoch* whilst he lived, exercised a special faith; I say, *Enoch* had a special Faith, a most remarkable faith, in some good and great deliverance that God would work for him either in Death or from Death: He trusted God whilst he lived in victory over Death, that Death should be conquered for him, and Death if it came should do him no harm; I say, he had a special faith in this respect; It appears by two Demonstrations.

1. First, In respect of that bold, that holy bold profession that *Enoch* makes of God in his Generation, which was a most corrupt time, and dangerous to make any profession of God in: righteous *Abel* was killed for his profession, for his walking with God, his Brother arose up and slew him, and yet *Enoch* is not dismayed, he will not turn aside from God, he will not balk his profession for fear of death, for fear of the sons of violence; the posterity of *Cain* was multiplied, and the earth was filled with violence at that time, and there was enmity in that seed of *Cain*, against the seed of *Seth*, which God raised up instead of *Abel*, so that it was dangerous for *Enoch* to make any profession of

God

God in his Generation; and yet *Enoch* was not dismayed, he feared not the hand of violence what it could do to him, but he trusted that God would deliver him either from Death or in Death. And,

2. Secondly; It appears that *Enoch* had such a remarkable faith, if we consider what was the name that he gave unto his Son, as in this Chapter, *He begat a Son, and called his name Methuselah*, that is, *Mortis gladium*, the sword of Death, or the dart of Death, he believed there was one a coming that should be the death of Death; one that should overcome death for him, and for all the people of God, and therefore called his son after that name, *The Sword of Death:* He knew there was a *Messiah* a coming that should send a challenge to death, as in *Hos.* 13. 14. *O death, I will be thy Plague; O Grave, I will be thy destruction*; Christ sent a challenge and perform'd this; *Enoch* saw this by faith, and all his dayes he lived in the contemplation of it, and sucked sweetness in the thoughts of it; and when e're death came, he believed it should do him no harm. This will teach us three or four Lessons.

1. First, There is nothing lost by making a bold profession of Christ in evil times, in the midst of dangers: *Abel* was slain because he walked with God, and yet *Enoch* will not go back, and *Enoch* lost nothing in conclusion; Oh, how often doth our Saviour call upon Christians, his Disciples and others, *Fear not them that can kill the body*, and can do no more; *the fear of man brings a snare*; how many poor creatures are insnared through this fear, the fear of man? That when God convinces of the truth, and of the way of God, the soul submits unto it, and yet dares not hold it forth, because of the fear of man, because it's a way that may be persecuted, that the Powers

of the world will perſecute it, and oppoſe it; O this fear of man brings a ſnare; what ſaies our Saviour in *Matth.* 10. 39. *He that will ſave his life ſhall loſe it, but he that will loſe his life, ſhall find it*; it is made good many times in this world: *He that will ſave his life ſhall loſe it*; when a man will turn aſide from God, when he will balk any way of God to ſave his life, or to ſave ſome comforts of his life, Oh, it will befall that poor creature as with the Prophet, *Some Lion comes in the way, he meets him and ſlays him:* But *he that will loſe his life ſhall ſave it*; he remembers the *three Children* ſpoken of in *Daniel*, they loſt nothing by their bold profeſſion, they were willing to loſe their lives, and ſo they ſaved their lives: and thus did they, and ſo did *Enoch*.

2. Secondly, It doth reach us how much God is delighted with the faith of his people: *Enoch* lived by *Faith* in a ſpecial manner, and how was the heart of God taken with *Enoch?* He was well pleaſing unto God, ſo well pleaſing that God could not long be without him; puts forth his hand and takes him up to himſelf; Oh, how greatly is the heart of God and Chriſt taken with Faith! We never read that Jeſus Chriſt wondred at any thing but at *Faith*: twice he wondred at the Faith that was given out to ſome of his ſervants; as in *Matth.* 8. Chriſt wondred at it, *O*, ſaies he, at the 10 Verſe, *when Jeſus Chriſt heard it, he marvelled and ſaid to them that followed him, Verily I ſay unto you, I have not found ſo great a Faith, no, not in Iſrael*; *When Jeſus Chriſt heard it, he marvelled*; and ſo the heart of Chriſt was taken with the Faith that was given out to the woman of *Canaan*, in *Matth.* 15. *O woman, great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt:* Faith gains the will of Chriſt; what a great deal hath God done to encourage his people to believe?

lieve? Faith finds not what it expecteth, but it finds more than ever it expected; certainly *Methuselah* believed death should do him no harm, and therefore he feared not death, and thought not of such a way as this is, but God was better to him than his Faith. You have a strong God, what encouragement is here? You have a strong Saviour; O let not your faith be weak, especially seeing the Lord is so delighted with it; he gives faith whatsoever it expects; nay, even beyond it's expectation. Again,

3. Thirdly, This teaches us, That to live much by faith is the way to make our translation easie; thus it was with *Enoch*, he lived all his daies by faith, and see how easie his translation was to him: there's nothing honours God in the world so much as faith doth; now therefore God delights to honour Faith, because it honours him, it hath the promise, *They that honour me, I will honour*; I beseech you then, you that would have an easie change (and who would not have an easie change, an easie translation?) when death comes who would not have a large door set open to them, and go with full sails for heaven?) If this be the desire of your hearts, then labour to live much by faith; it is faith that will set the door wide open, it will minister abundance of entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord; the spirit of faith will fill the soul with full sails, it shall go to Heaven with full sails; thus it was with *Enoch*, who lived by faith.

4. But again, Fourthly, A fourth thing that we may learn is this, that when God doth give out a special faith, he doth give out some special mercy; when God gives out a special faith, a particular faith, he that perswades the heart to believe it, it shall be easie to him. *Enoch* was perswaded in a special faith to believe something concerning death that God would do for

Enoch, and he did believe; it is rare and extraordinary; this special faith that doth concern such and such as a special mercy that God doth put the soul to seek after it, if the heart be perswaded by God to believe such a particular mercy to be given out, certainly if God do perswade the heart to wait for that mercy, that mercy shall be given out: see *David* in *Psal.* 27.4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord: that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the daies of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his holy Temple.* There he had a desire to come back again to *Jerusalem* to see the Lord in his Temple, and his heart was carried out strongly to believe it; he was banished by *Saul* a mighty King, and he durst not come into the Land, and how then could he come to the Temple? yet he would not fear, for that one thing that God had put in his heart to seek after, for that his heart was upheld in it. And thus God may deal with some of his servants, when he doth raise up his peoples hearts to believe some special mercy, that mercy shall be given out according to their faith. That's a second mercy why *Enoch* was thus translated, he was one that had a special remarkable faith, that something God should do for him in or about Death.

There's a third Question follows, Wherefore *Enoch* was thus translated?

The Answer is, That so his translation might preach unto the men of that Generation, yea, to all succeeding Generations, that there shall be a *Resurrection of the Body:* I say, therefore did God thus translate *Enoch*, that his translation in body to heaven might witness to them, and so to all other Generations, that there is a time when that the bodies of the Saints shall be co-partners with their souls in Glory: Here God

Preached

Preached the Doctrin of the Resurrection of the Body, by *Enoch*'s translation; in all Ages God hath not left himself without witness, concerning this great truth, the Resurrection of the Body; and certainly the Lord saw that there was need that he should bear witness of this truth: there was need then, and there is need now, even in this Generation, that we should be informed, perswaded, and rooted in this Doctrine of the *Resurrection of the Body*; there's great need that Christians should be confirmed in it, in the knowledge and in the full perswasion of it. For,

1. First of all, It is the Doctrine that the Devil hath alwaies sought to over-throw, the powers of Hell have bandyed against it, and how hath the Devil by his Instruments, by Atheistical men opposed this Doctrin in every Age? It hath been opposed, and it is still opposed. I shall shew you what opposition is made against it, that so you may be confirmed in it. It's sad to think that some that have formerly made a profession, should fall so far as to deny a Resurrection; and yet such a seducing spirit is gone forth in the world: I shall shew you what the Atheist hath against it, that your hearts may be confirmed in this Doctrin.

Quest. Why, First, Say they, it's against reason: How is it possible that the bodies of men should be raised up again, whenas their bodies are devoured & consumed in the heart of the earth, they are turned into the very elements again, into their first principles, and how is it possible that the same bodies should be raised up again?

Answ. To this, I'le answer in the words of our Saviour Christ, *O*, saies he, *you erre, not knowing the Scripture, nor the power of God*; for that was the answer that Christ gave unto the *Sadducees*, that denyed the Resurrection, in *Matth.* 22. 29. *Ye erre, not knowing the Scriptures*; he tells them, they were not

acquainted with that which God had spoken in his Word, he brings one Scripture that they did not know, and therefore they erred because they did not know it: *Have not you read*, saies he, *that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; they said there was no Resurrection; saies Christ, Poor creatures, you say so, because you don't know the Scriptures, ye err therefore because you know not the Scriptures: God saies, *I am the God of Abraham*; God saies this after *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* are dead and gone, that he is the God of *Abraham*, therefore there is something of *Abraham* yet remains, and *Abraham* shall live again, for God saies he owns them, and saies, ye know not the power of God, *Ye err not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God:* you measure God by the arm of flesh, because it's impossible to you, you think it's impossible to God, whenas God is infinite, and can do whatsoever he please; if you did but consider the power of God, saies he, you would not err on this manner, even to deny the Resurrection as a thing impossible: Why, who made the world? Who made all things out of nothing? Who brought light out of darkness? Certainly to raise up the dead is not a greater matter than to make the World of nothing; certainly if you had known the Scriptures, you would not have denied the power of God in raising from the dead. But the Devil is subtil, and therefore when reason won't do, he flees to Scripture, he'll bring you Scripture to deny the Resurrection; that Scripture is urged by some Atheistical spirits, 1 *Cor.* 15. 50. *Now this I say Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*; therefore, say they, the Scripture is against the Resurrection, there shall be no resurrection, because *flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*.

To

To this I answer,

1. First, That sinful flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, corrupt man cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; but the bodies of the Saints shall be raised without sin, there shall be no defilement when they come out of the Grave, they shall be purified sufficiently; and therefore then they may inherit the Kingdom of God. And,

2. Secondly, It's true, that weak, frail, corruptible flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but when the bodies of the Saints be raised up, they shall not be weak, frail and corruptible as their bodies are now; no, they shall leave all their weaknesses, all their frailties shall be left behind them, all these shall be left in the Grave; therefore the Apostle answers sufficiently in the 53 verse of that Chapter, *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on Immortality*; frail corruptible flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God: but it shall not be so at the Resurrection, but *this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this poor mortal body shall put on Immortality*, it shall no more be cloathed with frail flesh and blood, but it shall put on new robes, new robes that shall not be changed, and that are not subject to change, that shall not wear away, but shall abide for ever in the Heavens, and therefore there is nothing in this against the Resurrection of the body, but it shall be partner with the soul in the blessedness of Heaven.

But there's another place that the Atheist doth alledge from Scripture, and that is from *Solomon*, what he saies in *Eccles.* 3. 19. *For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth Beasts, even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no preheminence above a beast: for all is vanity.* Hence the Atheist

Atheist concludes that there's no Resurrection, for when death comes, it's with man as a beast; who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward?

To this I answer, That *Solomon* doth not speak in his own person, he speaks in the person of the Atheist, he tells you what is the Atheists conclusion, what he saies in his heart because of those oppressions that he saw under the Sun, *I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.* There you have the thoughts of *Solomon*, there he speaks his own, it was a conclusion of his from the observation that he saw under the Sun, to see how one man oppressed another, even like beasts; and there he brings in the conclusion of the flesh, and the conclusion of the spirit: the conclusion of the spirit is, *God shall judge betwixt the righteous and the wicked,* and so he brings them in scoffingly, Who knows the spirit of a man that goeth upward, *&c.* you see it was not *Solomon's*, it was far from *Solomon's* thoughts that there should be no Resurrection, in *Eccles.* 11. 9. *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart chear thee in the daies of thy youth, and walk in the light of thine eyes: But know thou, for all these things God will bring thee into Judgement. Solomon* concludes with the Resurreon, and it was the conclusion of his Book, in his last Chapter, 13, 14 verses, *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into Judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* You see how the Devil by his Agents doth strike at this Doctrin of the Resurrection, he destroies all

God-

Godlineſs, all the power of Godlineſs, he deſtroies the Kingdom of God at once, and he builds up his own Kingdom for ever; If there be no Reſurrection, then ſaies the Atheiſt, *Let us eat and drink, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and more abundant: if our hopes were only in this life, we were of all men moſt miſerable*; it deſtroies the whole myſterie of Godlineſs, then all ſhould be in vain, Preaching and Hearing in vain, and your faith in vain, if there be no Reſurrection: Now therefore, I beſeech you, get your hearts eſtabliſhed in this Reſurrection. The Devil plaies not at ſmall game, but he ſtrikes at the fulneſs of the root, at the Scriptures, he ſtrikes at the Reſurrection. O get your hearts eſtabliſhed. Some that have been as ſtars in the Firmament, have been ſwept down ſo low as to deny the Reſurrection of the body: know therefore that it is the Will of the Father, that Jeſus Chriſt ſhould raiſe up; all his people at the laſt day; ſo he tells them, and ſo he would have all his people believe it, it is the Will of the Father, that *of all that he hath given me, I ſhould loſe none, but he will raiſe them up at the laſt day:* and know that your bodies ſhall as certainly be raiſed up again, as the body of Jeſus Chriſt was raiſed up, there was a ſeminal vertue in Chriſt, but it was not ſo in others, they did riſe, but Chriſt aroſe as a common perſon, and his Reſurrection is as the ſeed of the Reſurrection of their bodies in the concluſion; even as certainly as Chriſts body was raiſed from the Grave, ſo ſhall thine; and know if it were not ſo, Chriſt ſhould not be compleat, the body of Chriſt ſhould not be compleat; for all his people are a part of his body, if the head be riſen, the members alſo ſhall riſe, for Chriſt without them is not compleat: and the body ſhall ariſe, becauſe without the body the man is not compleat; I ſay, man is not

compleat

compleat without the body; the soul waits for the Resurrection of the body, it is not compleat, it hath not its fulness of joy untill the Resurrection: and therefore it's said in *Rev.* 6. 10. the souls under the Altar cry out, *How long! ord holy and true, dost not thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* The soul thinks long when it shall meet with its old friend again, the body: Oh Lord how long, say they, shall we be in this condition? Now seeing it is so, there shall certainly be a Resurrection of the body at last; and if there shall be a Resurrection of the body, then I beseech you, consider *what manner of persons we ought to be*, how should you endeavour after holiness in the body, seeing there shall be a Resurrection of the body; whilst you are in the body, how should you demean your selves in all holiness? O what need is there that you should get faith in Christ, to cover, and to wash away all those sins and defilements of the body? And how careful should you be to keep your bodies holy, as the Temples of the holy Ghost? That so when your souls and bodies are parted, there may be a longing for a Resurrection, that your soul may say, Lord how long, how long, when shall that poor body that sleeps in the dust be raised up? It will not be so with wicked men, they won't call for a Resurrection; the souls of the wicked had rather their bodies should sleep perpetually, that there should be no morning, that there should be no Gaol delivery, rather be in Prison than come forth to the Assizes; but it shall not be so with the Saints in their state of separation of soul from the body, they think long that their bodies may be raised from the Grave, that their souls may be copartners with them in the glory that Christ shall give out. And to say no more, in the

Last

Last place, I beseech you (with the Apostle) comfort one another with these sayings. Do but consider how comfortable this Doctrin of the Resurrection is in it self; O the Resurrection of the body, a great deal of a Christians comfort is laid up in it: The Resurrection of the body may be comfort to you in all your afflictions that you meet withal whilst you are in the body; in the midst of all your infirmities and weaknesses and troubles whilst you are in the body: *When this corruptible shall put on incorruption*; Oh! how willingly should we spend and be spent for Christ, because he will give it all back at the Resurrection again? How willingly should we lay down our bodies, our lives for Christ, if Christ call for them, because there is a Resurrection of the body: *All that the Father hath given him, it is the Will of the Father that he should raise them up at the last day.* It will be comfort to you when you come to lay your heads in the Grave at rest, you shall not be in Prison for ever, your bodies shall not lie in the dark Dungeon for ever; No, Christ hath taken away the horror of the Grave, and he would not have you meditate horror there; the Covenant of God, (you that are his people) holds with your bodies, where ever you are, the Covenant of God laies hold upon your scattered bones, the Covenant of God holds with their very bones, and Christ will come to open those Prison doors: the Apostle saies, the whole Creation groans, *Rom.* 8. 22. *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth, and travelleth in pain together until now, waiting for that deliverance in that great day*, the day of Resurrection, the very earth shall travel, and it groans to bring forth, even all those sons and daughters that have lain so long in the bowels of the earth, even all that have been buried in the Earth and Sea, it groans to be delivered of them; and

and therefore what matter of comfort is this? The Lord would have you assured of this, That there shall be a Resurrection of your bodies, he hath taught it in the Type, whilst you have seen *Enoch*, *Enoch* translated in the body; and he hath given you a greater confirmation by Jesus Christ, who is risen and sits at the right-hand of the Father: he is the seminal Comforter, therefore O ye Saints, be ye comforted waiting for that day of Resurrection. And so much for this time.

SER-

SERMON XIII.

GEN. 5. the latter end of the 24 Verse.

———*For God took him.*

I Desire you with patience one hour longer, then I hope through Gods assistance to finish that which I have been so long insisting upon, from this Text. The last day we enquired wherefore God took *Enoch* in that extraordinary manner, why was he translated that he should not see death: I gave three Answers then. I shall proceed to a further Answer to this Question.

Quest. Wherefore *Enoch* was thus Translated that he should not see Death?

Answ. It was, That so the Lord might be a defence to that great Mysterie, even in that Generation, that he might give them a taste, and so see of that wonderful good that God should work towards the end of the world, when Christ shall come in his glory, when the bodies of all the Saints that are alive shall be changed, when they shall not see Death (as *Enoch* was translated that he saw not death) I say, here God gave some first-fruits of that wonderful work that he should do for his people at his next coming, when the Saints that are alive

alive shall not die, but shall all have their living upon the face of the Earth, and be taken up as *Enoch* was, and as *Elias* was, even so shall they be taken up, and lifted up to meet the Lord in the Air: and here is a Mysterie which is more fully made known to us by our Lord Jesus, since the coming of Christ in the flesh; see what the Apostle speaks concerning this great mysterie of the change of those at Christs coming, in 1 *Cor.* 15. 51. *Behold, I shew you a mysterie, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last Trump (for the Trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed:)* Again the same Apostle doth plainly declare this mysterie to the *Thessalonians*, 1 Thes. 4. 15, 16. *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* He doth reveal this mysterie in all the parts of it; we that are alive shall not prevent them that sleep: Christ shall first descend, and the Trumpet shall blow, and they shall be raised, and then shall we be changed.

But you will say, Doth not this crosse other Scriptures? Is it not said, that *it is appointed for all men once to die?* Why then doth the Apostle say, *We shall not all die, we shall not all sleep?*

I Answer, First of all, That this Word of the Lord is not crost, though the Lord is pleased to mitigate the sentence: there shall be a kind of death to the Saints

Saints that are then alive when Christ shall come, they shall not die properly, there shall not be a separation of body and soul: yet there shall be a metaphorical death, there shall be a change, and so great a change, even as death is (the change of the Resurrection meeting together) which certainly is very great: and this cannot be without some fear, and some horror, which shall be even as the horror of death unto the Saints: for though there shall be no harm, they shall not be harmed when the first Trumpet shall blow, no harm to the Saints, all the woe shall be past; but yet I say, there may be a great deal of cause of fear of death, for Christ shall first descend before they be changed; and therefore there is room left for fear and horror, the Text saies *Christ shall first come with thousands, and ten thousands of Angels, and the Trump shall blow, and the dead shall be raised, and all this before those that are alive shall be changed; and then*, saies he, *we that are alive shall be changed, and be caught up even with them.* Now Brethren, seeing God hath seen this needful, that this mysterie should be revealed in all Ages, therefore a glimpse of it must be given out to those Generations in which *Enoch* lived when he was taken up: and so afterward the same was thought of *Elias* when he was taken up into Heaven; The Lord hath seen it needful, I say, that this mysterie should be known, and if it were needful for them, then it is much more needful for us; it is needful for us upon whom the ends of the earth are come, that we should know this mysterie, and that being in a continual expectation of the fulfilling of it; it is needful both for the consolation, and for the instruction of the Saints that this mysterie should be made known.

For their consolation, Why, the time is coming, when Death shall be swallowed up, when the Saints

shall not die, but they shall be changed: this change is more desirable than death; Gods people in all Ages have longed after it, and therefore God hath revealed that there is such a change to be, and that all his people might take in the comfort of it before-hand: God hath in all Ages given warning, as if it might be in that very Age; that his people might before-hand take in the comfort of it: the Apostle *Paul* declares that he and the rest of the Saints were more desirous to live to this time than to be dissolved by death, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *We groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our house which is from Heaven:* we would not be uncloathed, saies he, there is a kind of reluctancy in Nature to be uncloathed, to put off from the body, we had rather be cloathed upon with our house which is from Heaven: we had rather, if the Lord please, that a change of raiment might be given out that shall endure for ever, that *Mortality might be swallowed up of life, and that this corruptible body might put on incorruption*; Now, I say, it being so desirable, and the Saints had rather, and are very desirous to see this change, God therefore in all Ages will not conceal it but make it known (as not impossible it might come in that very Age in which they live) that so possibly they may take in the comfort of it before-hand: at least the Saints, though they don't see to this day, you shall not be any losers, you may die in the Faith of it, and take in the sweetness of this promise you shall be no losers, you shall not be prevented, they shall not be in Heaven before you, with Christ before you, but even you that lie in the Grave shall be first raised, and then those that are alive shall be changed.

The Lord would also have you be instructed by this mysterie; he sees it needful to be declared, that his people, his Saints might live in a continual expectation

of

of this change, this great change that shall be when Christ shall come again, and therefore the time was concealed that the Saints might live in a continual expectation of it, and the Apostle speaks it as to his age, *Even we that are alive shall be changed*; because the Lord would have his people in every Age to live as those that do expect the coming of Jesus Christ, when this great and wonderful change shall be: you had need alwaies stand upon your watch, you know not when your Lord will come, at what hour he will return from the Wedding, and therefore we had need be alwaies prepared, and stand with our loyns girt, and Lamps trimmed, for there is some dread (for a moment at least) to the Saints when Christ shall come, it will be worse if you shall be found slumbering and sleeping in carnal security, it will be a great amazement when Christ shall come, and thousand of thousands of Angels shall come with him and proclaim his glory, when there shall be a great cry at midnight, *The Bridegroom is come*, certainly it will be a great amazement even to the Saints themselves that shall be in carnal security; therefore it concerns us every moment to be upon our Watch-Tower. You see wherefore it was that God took *Enoch* away in an extraordinary way that he should not see death: there is one Question yet behind.

Quest. Why did God take *Enoch* away at this time?

The main Answer which I shall give, is this,

Answ. The Lord when he takes his people away doth thereby give warning; by taking *Enoch* away, That there was a deluge of wrath coming upon the old World: the Lord would put them upon it to consider what his event should be in this providence, that so if possible they might prevent that deluge of wrath, that

Flood of water that came and swept them away. When the Lord doth suddenly take away those that are found faithful in their Generation, it is a warning of wrath to come: I say, when God doth suddenly snatch away those that are found faithful in their Generation, it doth often presage some great wrath to come; you have an express Scripture for it, in *Isa.* 57. 1. *The righteous perisheth, and no may layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken from the evil to come:* When God takes away righteous and merciful men, and those that are left behind, do not lay it to heart, if they don't consider it, and make use of it, it is a certain sign of evil that is to come upon them. God took away *Enoch* in his Generation, and he took away all the rest of the Patriarchs that are spoken of in this Chapter, they were all taken away before the Flood of waters came upon the world; *Methusalah* (he that was *Enoch*'s son) lived the longest, and it is thought he was taken away either that very year, or the year before the Flood came upon the old World, God swept away them all, even those that were remarkable in their Generation, and then wrath comes upon the world: *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave,* saies *Job*, in *Job* 14. 13. *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave, and keep me secret until thy wrath be past*; God hath some hiding places or other for his people, and sometimes the Grave is a hiding place: though sometimes *Job* doth not bespeak the Grave, yet here sometimes God hideth in the Grave till such time as wrath be over. Such as walk with God in their Generation, they are Christs Flock, though they be Pilgrims and Strangers upon the earth, Sojourners, Travellers, yet they are Christs Flock, here they rest, and many times Christ will Fold his

Flock;

Flock; before a Storm comes the Shepherd gathers his Flock together: When a great Storm of Hail and Fire came upon the *Egyptians*, the *Israelites* that were in *Goshen* gathered all their Flocks together, and then they were safe; Christ shrouds the most of his Flock, the chief of his Flock from some approaching wrath that draws near.

2. Secondly, They are the Lords Houshold-stuff; I say, his people are his choice Houshold-stuff, they are my Jewels, *In the day that I make up my Jewels.* When a man removes away all his best Houshold-stuff, and carries away his Jewels, you may guess that man doth not intend to be robb'd: and so when the Lord doth remove his Jewels, his choice Houshold-stuff, it is a sure sign of his departure, at least God gives warning to that people, and if they won't take warning, and cry unto the Lord as they did, *O why goest thou away and stayest for a night?* And if God depart from a place, what follows, *your place is left to you desolate, and woe be to you:* What a woe doth he threaten by the Prophet *Hosea*, *Hos.* 9. 12. *Woe also to them when I depart from them:* Woe, desolation, and ruine certainly comes upon a people when God departs from them.

3. Thirdly, Again, The righteous they are the Pillars of the place: such as walk with God in their Generation, they are the Pillars of Families, the Pillars of Cities, and the Pillars of Kingdoms, nay, they are the Pillars of the whole World: so saies the Psalmist, *The earth shook, O Lord, and I will bear up the Pillars of it*; If the Pillars of the House be pluckt down, how can the House stand? If you see one Pillar after another fall, you will conclude certainly that House won't hold long; Why, the Saints are the Pillars of the World, and if it were not for their

sakes, the earth would mingle together presently; but you must know this is not from any merit, worth, or righteousness of theirs, though they are thus called Pillars, I say, it is not for any worth or righteousness of the Saints, or the best on earth: but they are called Pillars, and they bear up Kingdoms, and they bear up the Earth,

1. First, Because God is intreated by their supplications; I say, they prevail, they stand at the gap, they prevail with God to keep out wrath and Judgement, that it may not break in: and so you know *Moses* pleads with God, and so long as *Moses* pleaded with God, God could do nothing against *Israel, Let me alone that I may destroy them:* and so *Abraham* pleads for *Sodom* that God would spare that City for ten righteous mens sakes, and God grants that request: and it is very observable that *Abraham* gave over first, God did not give over first, it is like if he had gone lower he might have prevailed; but there was a holy ingenuity and faithfulness in him, when he considered, that in so many Cities there should not be ten righteous men there, why, he could not in ingenuity ask any less: and so by their supplication they bear up Kingdoms and Nations.

2. Secondly, And then again, The Lord doth spare places and people many times, from the care that God hath of them, for the care that the Lord hath of his own people, *Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked?* Rather spare the wicked for the righteous sake: and God doth choose this way, this is Gods way, he will rather spare the wicked for the righteous sake, because God is exceeding careful of his own people, he fears left they should suffer, he will rather have the tares grow with the Corn together, than the good Corn should be in danger of being pluckt up;

up; and therefore he tells *Lot* of making haste, in *Gen.* 19. when God was about to destroy *Sodom*, *Haste thee, escape thither: for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither*; I am so careful of my *Lot*, that I can do nothing in way of Judgement till *Lot* be out of fear and danger; this was not for desert of *Lot*'s righteousness, but the free-grace of God towards him, for it is said in that Chapter, *When the Lord delivered him, he was merciful to him.*

3. Thirdly, The Lord spares (many times) evil wicked men, for the love that he bears to his own: he gives to his people the lives of others, because he loves them so dear; so God gave *Paul*, in *Acts* 27.24. he gave him the lives of a great many, the lives of all that were in the Ship, which were two hundred threescore and sixteen souls, because the Lord loved him dearly: O how good is it to be with the righteous? It is good to be in their very company; one righteous man, one *Paul* saves a Ship-ful: ten righteous men may save *Sodom*, and four Cities more; and a considerable number of righteous men may save a Kingdom; for a few righteous mens sakes the whole world is preserved, that fire and wrath is not mingled in a moment, heaven and earth mingled in a moment, it is for their sakes. And therefore I beseech you, consider and take notice of the infinite goodness and patience of God even to the worst of sinners, that he should be pleased thus to give warning before he strikes, to give warning to a sinful Generation, by his own people before he destroy the world; O the abundance of the good patience of God! God seldom smites by a remarkable Judgement till he gives warning, it is sad warning, and of all warnings this is a warning when God is a taking away his own people, to take them away from the evil to come: it is a sad warning unto a

people in that condition, that takes not this warning, when God is at so much pains and cost with them. Therefore in the second place,

I beseech you, when God gives this warning, O let us be careful to take it; it is the greatest provocation to God when he gives warning, and we take it not: in this regard Christ upbraids the Scribes and Pharisees, and saies to them, *Can you discern the face of the Skies, and cannot you see these signs? Do you see the signs there, and cannot you discern the signs of the times?* Cannot you discern when full wrath is coming, when Judgement is a coming? Cannot you discern it by Gods signs? O how many signs hath God shewn, what abundance of his *Noahs* hath he Shipt? How many *Enochs* have been translated by death? How much blood hath been spilt, precious blood? O that God would make it to be a warning to this Generation, that the Lord would stir us up too, to revive and run after him; that God should give us warning, O that we could say, *Thou hope of Israel, why shouldst thou be as a stranger, and as a wayfaring man, that staies but for a night, and is gone in the morning?* But,

Again, This upbraids the World for their former Ingratitude to the Saints, it is for their sakes that you wicked have your lives continued, and all your comforts continued, and how is the enmity of the world let forth against those for whose sakes they are preserved? What folly is it that men should go about to pull down the Pillars of that house in which they dwell? It was an extream desperate action that *Sampson* did, when that he should pull down the Pillars of the House, and it cost him his own life? O this is the folly of the wicked in the world that rage against the Saints, that pull down the Pillars; well, know of a truth, when those Pillars are down, the House will fall upon your head,

head, and to pull down these Pillars, will be to pull down the house to your own destruction.

Again, This may teach the people of God to submit willingly, to lie down willingly in the dust, when God shall call them: it is possible they may be taken away from a great deal of evil to come, it should make them willing to lie down in the dust when God calls; God may take you away from many an evil day that is coming, many an evil day of persecution, and many an evil day of old age, *Remember thy Creator in the daies of thy youth*; through the infirmities that do accompany old age, it becomes *an evil day*.

Again, There's danger then of declining: O *David* prayed, and prayed heartily, that God would not leave him to his own will, and that he would take him from the *evil to come*.

Object. But you will say, There may be hopes of good daies, and that might make us unwilling to die, in hopes of good daies.

Answ. Why, God may make you willing as *Moses* was; though at the Borders of *Canaan*, yet God would have him die, and he goes up to the Mountain and dies very willingly: there may be a great deal of evil before the good come, a great deal of shakings, sore shakings before the good day come; the passage to the Land may be very strait, yet Christ will bring thee along with him when he comes; I say, when ever Christ comes he will bring the Saints along with him, *We that are alive, shall not prevent those that are dead*; No, they shall rise first, and then shall we be changed. Therefore God took away *Enoch* at this time, that he may give warning to the World that wrath was a coming.

2. Secondly, Again, God took away *Enoch* at this time, that he might declare, that he had respect unto his

his people, though the World was never so wicked, though they are never so cruel, yet they shall not be forgotten, but the Lord remembers, the Lord takes notice of them, *If I find ten righteous men in Sodom*, saies God, *I will not destroy that City for tens sake*; God seeks his own people, and if he finds but ten righteous souls in a City, for their sakes it shall not be destroyed, not an *Enoch* shall be forgotten: Men may cast away much chaff, and though there be two or three Corns or more of Wheat, they won't look for them; but God won't do so; if a heap of chaff be never so great God will look over it, and he will not lose one Corn though in abundance of Chaff; his people do glorifie him much in an evil time, and grace is remarkable then, when it shines bright in the midst of a dark night, the Lord will remember you: and therefore if the Lord will find you out, and remember you in an evil World, Oh! how should you remember him? He will do the more for you, and deal the more remarkably with you, because you are found faithful in an evil time, in an evil World, even as *Enoch*: therefore be ye careful to walk with God. Again,

3. Thirdly and lastly, God will declare hereby that the perfection and happiness of his people is not here below, and therefore he would have them, and all the world to know that the perfection and happiness of the Saints is not below: *Enoch* enjoyed as much of God as ever man did, and yet *Enoch* must be translated before he comes to perfection; God witnesses to this in the lives of the best of the Saints in that Generation: there is none that lived a thousand years, though there came many nigh to a thousand years, which is the perfect number, the perfect account. The Lord would teach that perfection is not here, but he would have us to know where we shall enjoy it:

there-

therefore let us see what necessity there is to live upon Jesus Christ by Faith in the worst of our daies; if perfection be not here, O what need then have you to live in Christ? *You are perfect in him*, saies the Apostle, *compleat in him*, and therefore in the sense and greatness of your Imperfections, you had need live upon that fulness, and breath after that fulness of time and perfection whither *Enoch* was translated unto. So much shall serve for this time.

SER-

SERMON I.

PHILIP. I. 21.

For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

THE Apostle was now in Bonds for the Gospel of Jesus Christ: he takes care that the *Philippians* might not be offended at it, that his sufferings might not be any stumbling-block to them, in *Verse* 12. he tells them that whatsoever befell him it was for the furtherance of the Gospel, *I would have you understand*, saies he, *the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel:* he gives two particular Instances how the Gospel of Christ was furthered by his sufferings, the one is in *Verse* 13. *My Bonds in Christ are manifest in all the Palace.* By his sufferings many in *Nero*'s Court came to enquire after the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for which *Paul* suffered; and by enquiring into it, were convinced of it. Another benefit of these his sufferings, is in *Verse* 14. *Many of the Brethren in the Lord waxed confident by my Bonds:* They were more bold to speak the Word of the Lord, they feared not sufferings, because they saw how God carried *Paul* through his sufferings, *They waxed*

waxed more bold through my Bonds. You see what improvement the Lord makes of the sufferings of his people. Truth never thrives better than when it is most trodden upon; the more the wind blows upon this fire, the more it kindles, the hotter it burns, and the clearer it shines: when the stream is dammed up, it rises higher, so it is with Truth; this was the advantage that God makes of the sufferings of his people, for though the Truth was upon trial, yet *Paul* may suffer, and *Paul* may lose by it, *Paul* was in danger of his life: Well, take no care for me, saies he in *Verse* 19. *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your Prayers, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ; according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed: but with all boldness, as alwaies, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.* Take no care for me, saies he, I desire nothing but your Prayers, for I am confident that God will carry on his Work, it shall turn to my good, and what ever befall me, the Lord shall be glorified in it; I am confident of it, saies he, that Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. You see the breathings of a gracious heart, it cares not what becomes of it self, so God may have his honour, *Take no thought*, saies *Paul*, *whether I live or die*, it is all one to me, so the Lord Jesus may be magnified in my bonds, by my life, or by my death, if Christ be glorified it is enough, it matters not what becomes of *Paul*, so Christ be magnified in my life, or in my death, *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Christ is gain to me both in life and death*; so some read the words, *For Christ is gain to me both in life and death:* Others make two Propositions of it, *Christ is life to me*, or, *to me to live is Christ*; *Christ is*

is my life, and *death is my gain:* Why, if I live, saies he, Christ shall be magnified, for Christ is my life; if I live, I shall gain, and if I die, I shall gain: If I live I shall gain more of Christ, I shall gain more knowledge of him, and more communion with him here in the way; Ay, but what if *Paul* die? If I die, saies he, I shall be no loser: death is look'd upon as a loss, therefore as *Paul* should have said, *For me to live is Christ*, or, *to die is Christ*; but he rather saies, *It is gain, it is Christ that makes it gain to him*, or else it is a loss to me, but Christ who is my life shall make death gain; So take no thought of me, saies he, whatsoever befalls me I shall do well, if I live, or if I die. And because you are more solicitous concerning my death, saies he, know that *death is my gain*; if I lose my friends and my comforts, if I lose life it self, it shall be no loss, it shall not undo me, for I shall find all in Jesus Christ, and so death shall be my gain.

DOCT.

Christ is the Believers Life.

That's the Proposition that lies before us. *For me to live is Christ*, or, *Christ is my Life*; it is all one: *Christ is the life of every believing soul.* By *Life* sometimes it is understood whatsoever is excellent, whatsoever is excellent in its kind, it is set forth by life, because life is the most excellent thing in nature, *Skin for Skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life*; and therefore the Bread which Christ gives, is called, *Living Bread*, *Bread of Life*, and so *Water of Life*, for the excellency of the spiritual things that the Lord gives out to his people; and truly

Christ

Christ is instead of all excellencies to a believing soul, he is the life of all their comforts; the comforts of the World are dead until such time as Christ shines in them, there is no life until such time as Christ shines through them, for riches are dead, and honour is dead, and friends are dead, all comforts are dead till the life of Christ be in them. But more particularly,

1. First, Christ is the *Life of Righteousness* to the believing soul: every child of *Adam* is dead, condemned, and so he is dead in Law: there is no life but by the righteousness of Christ, that righteousness which Christ brought in by his blood: He gave life by making satisfaction to Justice, by paying the debt unto death; therefore the Apostle saies, that *Righteousness reigns by Christ*, in *Rom.* 5. sin entered into the world by *Adam*, speaking there at *Verse* 17. *For if by one mans offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ:* Righteousness raigns in a believing soul by Jesus Christ, it hath the preheminence of all, all is dross and dung in comparison of this righteousness of Jesus Christ, it reigns gloriously in a believing soul; it is Christ that procures this righteousness, and it is Christ that applies this righteousness by his Spirit, I say the Application of this life of righteousness, is from Christ, it is he that reveals this righteousness, it is he that discovers it to the soul, it is Christ by his eternal Spirit that causeth the soul to know this life and righteousness which is given to it: now as Christ doth discover this righteousness, so he causeth the soul to close with this righteousness, it is he by his Spirit that overcomes the heart to rest upon this righteousness, and to look upon this righteousness as its life; for there is a principle in the creature to seek after life in it self;

man

man would seek righteousnes in himself; and it is a hard matter to bring the soul off of this rotten sandy foundation; Christ only by his eternal Spirit when he hath revealed this righteousnes, perswades the soul to rest upon it, and to look upon him as its life.

2. Secondly, Again, As the life of righteousnes is from Christ, so *the life of holiness* is from Christ: all those gracious dispositions, and all those holy actings that do at any time shine forth in the hearts and lives of Gods people, they have no other foundation but Christ, the holiness of Christ: *From his fulness have all we received grace for grace*; if there be the life of any grace in the soul, it is from Jesus Christ, from the fulness of Christ: there is no man lives the life of holiness, till Christ becomes a principle of life to him; there is no breathings in the heart after Christ, there is no holy motion in pursuit after Christ, till Christ first breaths upon the soul: *The hour is come, and now is, that they that are in their Graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it shall live.* There is no man lives the life of holiness until such time as he hears the voice of the Son of God: there may be Carkasses of grace, out-sides of grace, and there may be Carkasses of duties and performances, but no living graces, there are no living performances until such time as Christ be a principle of life unto the soul; the beginning of the life of holiness, and so the encrease of the life of holiness is from Christ: *I came that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly*; Christ decreed that you might have life, and that you might have abundance of life, that you might be filled with the Spirit of Christ, that you might have abundance of the life of Christ, that his people might be ready in his strength to every good word and work; this was the end of

Christs

Christs coming that they might have life more abundantly; he is the life of holiness. But again,

3. Thirdly, Christ is the *Life of Consolation* unto his people: He is the life of all their comforts, and the comforts that Christ gives they are living comforts: my peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, give I unto you; for no man shall take away your peace, the world shall not take it away, my Spirit shall be an everlasting living principle of consolation in you, which shall not be taken away: Christ is the life of all a Christians comforts, he is the life of friends, the life of all refreshments that a Christian hath, and they are all dead to him when Christ doth not shine through them, he is the life of comforts, and *the life of Ordinances*; there is no life, there is no refreshment, if Christ be not in them; if the soul meets not with Christ in Ordinances, they are but dead Ordinances, truly Christ is the life of all. He is also,

4. Fourthly, *The Life of Glory*, Christ is the life of glory to his people: It is he that hath purchased glory for them by his blood, it is he that hath made the way plain, it is he that hath made a new way to glory, when the old way was shut; you read in *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. *Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh:* A new and living way to God, a new and living way to the bosom of the Father, it is Christ that is this living way: *For he lives for ever to make Intercession for them that come to God by him*: He it is that removes all the blocks out of the way of his people to glory, that helps them over all rubs they meet with, it is he that hath born down all oppositions, when he travelled in the greatness of his strength, he hath set Heaven door

open to his people, he hath removed the Cherubims that kept the way with a flaming sword, and kept the Tree of Life, yea, Christ is the subject matter of their Glory; it is the presence of Christ that makes Heaven to be Heaven, it is the glory of Heaven to know God in Christ, and it is the glory of Heaven to enjoy God in Christ, *Joh.* 17. 3. *And this is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:* Thus you see how Christ is the life of Believers, what life he is to them; he is the life of righteousness, the life of holiness, and the life of their comforts; yea, and he is the life of Glory. And it will appear that Christ is the life of the believing soul, if you consider,

1. First, That there is none lives but Christ, *He hath life in himself; as the Father hath life in himself, so it is given to the Son to have in himself:* There is none lives but God: and therefore when God will confirm a thing, he swears by his life; you have often that Oath, *As I live, saith the Lord; As I live, saith the Lord:* there is none can say, *I live*, but only God, he that is *Jehovah*, that hath life in himself. Now therefore, if any creature have life, if there be any spark of life in any soul, it must be from this life in Christ, there is no principle of spiritual life in a soul, but it must be from Christ, if there be any life, it is from the life of Christ, from the Resurrection of Christ, and from the discoveries of Christ.

2. Secondly, It was the end of Christs coming in the flesh, That he might give life to his people, as you heard before, *I came*, saies Christ, *that you might have life*; Christ came in the flesh for this end, he had not lived in this world, if it had not been to give life to his people, it was the end of his life, and so it was the end of his death also; he tells us in *Joh.* 6. 51.

If

If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread which I will give, is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world; I will give my flesh, my body to be crucified, that so my death may be the life of the world; and it was the end of Christs living again, it was the end of his rising again, that he might give life to his people, *Joh.* 14 19. *Because I live*, saies he, *ye shall live also*; my life is the cause of your living, I live for this end, and arose for this end, *I am he that was dead and am alive, and live for ever, and because I live, ye shall live also.*

Quest. But you will say, When may it be said that Christ is the *Life* of any soul?

Answ. 1. First of all, When the soul *prizes Communion with Christ as life*: And mark all the way, so much as the life of Christ is in any soul, so far will these effects and operations of life be found in him; Christ is life, when communion with Christ is prized as life; when the soul shall prefer communion with Christ above all other comforts whatsoever, when he seeks after it as life, and when he hath found it he prizes it as life, and is as fearful to lose it as he is to part with his life; and he cannot be satisfied without it, though he enjoies never so much of the world, though he hath never so many friends, and they shine upon him, and they speak comfortably to him, yet if Christ speak not, it doth not satisfie: though he hath never so good trading in the world, and prosper in his Estate, yet if he hath not trading with Christ, if he hath not his mercies come in through Christ, he looks upon himself as a loser; so far as the life of Christ prevails with a soul, so far will the soul prize communion with Christ. Again,

2. Secondly, When the life of Christ is in a soul, the *Soul doth judge of it self*, not by what it is in it

self, but *by what it is in Christ*, by what it is in another; the life of Christ was *Paul*, and how did *Paul* judge of himself, by what? By what he was in Christ, and by what Christ was in him, and to him; *I live*, saies he, *and yet not I, but Christ lives in me*, in *Gal.* 2. 20. how doth he judge of his life, not by any principle of self that was in him, but by Christ that was in him, *I live, yet not I; but Christ lives in me*; *Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength*, Isa. 45. 24. When he shall see that he hath no righteousness in himself, no strength in himself, he shall not judge of his present state or future happiness by what righteousness, or what strength he hath in himself, but by what Christ hath promised him, he shall judge by the Word of the Lord, and by what life of Christ is made over to him; and he shall say, *Surely, I have righteousness and strength*, I have all in another, at that time when I have nothing but vileness and deadness in my self; so that the soul judges of it self and its condition, not according to what it finds in it self, but according to what the Lord hath promised to be unto him. Again,

3. Thirdly, Where Christ is the life of a soul, there is Christ *the principle of all holy actings in that soul:* The soul when ever it sets upon any duty, or upon any holy work, presently it looks up for the power and spirit of Christ, it gives up it self to be acted by Christ, to be carried on by the spirit of Christ; Christ opens the sails of the soul to the gales of the spirit, for it knows that if the spirit of Christ do not breath, the soul is calmed, it can do nothing, it desires that Christ may have the glory of all that it doth, that Christ may be the principle of all its workings for God; all the fruit that a gracious heart brings forth to God, it desires that Christ may have the honour of it; and therefore it

bears

bears as it were upon Christs knee, as the women of old took their Hand-maids when they were barren, and they bare upon their knees, and the Children were called theirs, not the Hand-maids: And truly so the beliving soul alwaies bears and brings forth fruit upon the knee of Christ, and it calls them all the Offspring of Christ; whatsoever it doth for God, whatever it brings forth to God, it looks upon it as the fruit of the Spirit of Jesus Christ; it desires that Christ may have the name, that Christ may have the glory of it, that Christ may be continually lifted up in all that it doth: and therefore when it is assisted to do for God, or to suffer for God, it doth not reflect upon it self, but upon Christ; these are the breathings of the spirit of Christ, and this is the strength that comes from Christ: and therefore it is said of *David, Lord what am I?* when he was inabled to offer willingly, *Lord what am I, and what are my people, that we should offer in this wise?* When ever it meets with any assistance, it saies, *Lord what am I, that I should do any thing for God?* It looks upon all as coming from Christ, and desires that Christ may have the glory of all; and so far as the life of Christ prevails upon the soul, so far the soul is acted by the spirit of Christ. But again,

4. Fourthly, Where Christ is the life of the soul, the *Soul desires that Christ may be magnified, whether by death or by life*; so it was with the Apostle, This is all my care, saies he, that Christ may be magnified, take you no care for me, for Christ shall be magnified, and I will rejoice in it, *Whether I live or die, Christ shall be magnified in my body*: He desires that Christ may be magnified in his life, a gracious heart doth not desire to live to satisfie its own lust, it would not live long in the world to enjoy the pleasure of the world;

no, if it lives, it desires to live that Christ may be magnified, and therefore if I may be useful, if I may be serviceable to do good in any place or relation the Lord is pleased to cast me in, I am content to live; and so for death, he desires that Christ may be magnified there too, a gracious heart don't desire death to be rid of the troubles of life, to be freed from those troubles and vexations that it meets withal in the world, that's no good desire, but if it desires death, it desires that Christ may be magnified, that the Lord may be magnified in my death, that Christ may be magnified, that I may get nigher Christ, that I may not dishonour Christ, that that corruption may be subdued, which is a grief to the spirit of Christ, that I may magnifie Christ eternally without ceasing; that Christ may be magnified, this is the desire of a gracious heart; and so far as the life of Christ doth prevail in any soul, so far doth that soul live unto Christ, and is willing to die for Christ, and cares not what becomes of it, so the Lord, and his son Christ may be exalted. Again,

5. Fifthly, When the life of Christ is in a soul, *It makes a man to die; to die to sin, and to die to the world, and to die to self.* Where the life of Christ comes in, it makes the soul to die to sin; that still as the life of Christ prevails in the soul, so sin dies in the soul: *Knowing this that our old man is crucified with Christ*; the old man is Crucified with Christ, and the life of Christ will be the death of the old man: He makes a man to die to sin; where the life of Christ is in a soul, the heart is dead to sin, it carries to sin, as to a dead man, it is cold at the very heart, no desire to satisfie the lusts of the flesh, but to live unto Christ; it makes the soul desirous to cast out all those lusts which it hath rejoyced in, and been the very life of the soul

before

before Christ came. See what is said in the Prophecie of the Prophet *Hosea*, *Hos.* 14. 8. *Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with Idols?* And so shall the soul say, where the life of Christ prevails, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* It looks upon all base lusts as so many dead Carcasses, they lie in his House and he knows not how to be rid of them, but the life of Christ is in him, and what hath the living to do with the dead? What have I any more to do with dead Carkasses? O Lord bury them, bury them out of my sight; the life of Christ will dead the heart to sin.

2. Secondly, Again, This life of Christ *will deaden the heart to the world*; see what the Apostle saies in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, *Gal.* 6. 14. *God forbid that I should glory in any thing, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world:* The world looks upon me as dead, and I look upon the world as dead; the world doth not at all esteem of a gracious man, and a gracious heart doth esteem the world as little, the vanities of the world as little; the world looks upon me, and I look upon the world as dead: *Paul* lookt upon it as dead, and therefore *Paul* was willing to part with it, in *Phil.* 4. 12, 13. men are willing to part with their dead friends, and *Paul* was willing to part with the world, it was dead to him; *I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound*; I know how to want, if God calls for it; I know how to spare, and I am content to be without it; thus doth the life of Christ make the heart dead to the world, deadens the affections, and makes a man to use the world as if he used it not.

3. Again, Thirdly and lastly, The life of Christ doth *make a man to die to self:* it makes a man to die

to self-principles, and self-ends. and self-seeking, to self-righteousnes and self-strength, it makes a man die to all these; where the life of Christ prevails, the creature is nothing, self is nothing, it makes a man debase himself, and lie low at the foot-stool of the Lord, it makes him lie low in a way of humiliation: *Paul* was less than the least of all Saints, so he calls himself, *Less than the least of all Saints*; and he was the greatest of sinners, so he calls himself; the life of Christ made him lie low, he had no life in himself. I will speak no more, saies *Job, I abhor my self in dust and ashes*; let God have all for the future, it desires to exalt him, to admire that which he can't find out: I desire to lye at his foot-stool, and to exalt his name; it makes a man lie low in a way of submission to God as well as in a way of humiliation, the life of Christ makes the heart submissive to Christ, self is nothing, self is laid aside, content that God should rule, that the creature should be disposed by him, makes him willing to drink of every cup that his father puts into his hand, to stoop down to every yoke, and every burden that the Lord will put upon his neck, and lay upon his shoulder, it makes a soul submissive unto Christ, submissive to the Will of God in all things.

And then the life of Christ *it empties of Self*, for it makes a man to condescend to those of low degree; though never so high, yet if the life of Christ be in them, it makes them to look down unto the lowest degree, and the life of Christ in the meanest and lowest Christian is very high and honourable in his esteem: and as the life of Christ doth prevail in any heart, so there will be all these operations, as the life of Christ doth increase, so the life of sin doth decrease, and self will decrease, and the soul is content with it, and it rejoices abundantly that it should be so; it saies of it self

as

as *John* Baptist did, when they told him that all men ran after Christ, and he would have no Followers, I am glad of it, saies he, that he may increase though I decrease; and truly where the life of Christ is in a soul, it will break forth into these Expressions, Let Christ be all, let me be nothing, let me lie low at his foot-stool, let me not be thought of when that day of Christs Exaltation shall be, let him be exalted in the riches of his grace which he hath manifested unto poor creatures. And thus you see what the life of Christ is in a soul, so far as the life of Christ is in the heart, so far will there be special operations in the soul towards Christ again. But so much for this time.

SER-

SERMON II.

PHILIP. 1. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Jesus Christ is the Life of every Believer; that's the Point in hand: He is the life of righteousness; he it is that gave life unto all those that were dead, dead under the Law, though reprieved for a time. He is also the life of *Holiness* to his people, the beginnings of all grace, and the encrease of all grace is from Christ; there are shadows and carkasses of grace, but there is no life until such time as Christ be found in the soul. He is also the life of all the Believers *Comforts*, they are no comforts till Christ be in them, the best of his comforts, even the very Ordinances of God are but a dead letter if the Spirit of Christ be not in them, it is he that makes them to be life, to come with power and efficacy. He is also the life of *Glory* to a Believer. He hath purchased Glory, he hath made the way plain, a new and living way, he hath set the door wide open, it's he that takes all rubs out of the way: It's he that is the very Subject matter of Glory; for it's the presence of Jesus Christ in Heaven that is the greatest glory and comfort of

of Heaven. I shewed how it may be known that Christ is the life of Believers in five Particulars.

6. A Sixth Particular is, Where the life of Christ is in any soul, it makes that soul in some measure conformable to the life of Christ; so far as the life of Christ doth prevail in a soul, so far it makes the soul conformable to that life of Christ which he lived when he was upon earth, it makes the soul desirous and willing to live to God: it looks upon it as the great work and great end of Christs coming, to lift up his Fathers Name, to make God glorious before the eyes of the sons of men, that's the work that his servants have to do for him whilst they are here upon earth. But more particularly,

1. First, If you look upon the life, you shall find that the life of Christ is an active life, it's said of him, *That he went up and down doing good*; he was never well but when he was doing good; he took opportunities, and he sought opportunities, he sought occasions of doing good to the bodies of men, and to the souls of men, *I have meat to eat that you know not of*; *it is my meat to do the will of my Father*; he was never well but when he was doing something by which he might glorifie God and edifie in love.

2. Again, Secondly, If you look upon the life of Christ, it was not only an active life, but it was a passive submissive life, it was a self-denying life. He left all his glory in Heaven when he came to live here upon earth, that he might live and die for the good of the sons of men; though he was the son of the most high God, yet he was pleased to condescend to the lowest of men, he emptied himself and became of no reputation, he was in the form of man, but yet came in the form of a servant, he emptied himself and became of no reputation, that so he might glorifie his Father;

Father; *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*; it was a self-denying work. Again,

3. Thirdly, It was a holy gracious life; he conversed with sinners, but he was the Lamb of God without spot; he was numbered amongst the Transgressors, but there was no guile found in his mouth, he was gracious in the midst of a sinful world, and therefore the Spouse stiles and resembles him to the *Apple-tree* in the midst of the Trees in the Forest, in *Cant.* 2. 3. he was full of sweet gracious fruit, even then when he was in the Forest, when he was compassed about with wild Trees, as Crab-trees, Prickling-thorns, Prickling-brambles, even so was the Lord Jesus amongst such: But the Lord was found in integrity, he was not levened with corruption, though he conversed with sinners, yet he was no sinner, the life of Christ was a gracious life, even then when he was in the midst of sinners. But again,

4. Fourthly, The life of Christ was full of patience, and full of meekness; he was very admirable in that patience and meekness which he exercised and expressed in his whole life; he was not easily provoked, for he endured alone all the contradictions of sinners, and he was dumb even before the shearer, he opened not his mouth; he did not render evil for evil, *He came to his own, and his own received him not*; What a provocation was there that his own should not receive him? And Christ could not easily be provoked, he bare with that people, and though they would not receive him, yet he spent his whole Ministry among them, and he sent forth his Disciples to pluck them in if possible, and gives them a charge that they should go to none else; in *Matth.* 10. 5. *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the City of the Samaritans enter ye not, but rather go unto the lost Sheep of the house*

house of Israel: Though they sought to destroy him, yet he endeavours to save them, he bears with them; *But rather go to the lost Sheep of the house of Israel:* What forbearance was there in him! In their ignorance he opened unto them those things which he spake in Parables to the world; what abundance of patience and meekness did he shew to *Thomas*, notwithstanding all that unbelief? Saies he, (in his unbelief) *I will not believe*, saies he, *except it be so and so, except I put my hand into the hole of his side*; and yet this did not provoke the Lord Jesus Christ to leave him, but he condescends to his weakness, heals his weakness, and plucks him out of that mire in which he stuck: And if you look upon his carriage towards his enemies, and see what a spirit of meekness there was in Christ, even towards his enemies; the *Samaritans* in one place, would not receive him; and see the Disciples they were for fire from Heaven to consume them, in *Luk.* 9. 53, 54. *And he sent Messengers before his face, and they went and entered into a Village of the Samaritans to make ready for him, and they did not receive him*, &c. *And when his Disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord wilt thou, that we command Fire to come down from Heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?* You think it is the spirit of *Elias*, but you are deceived, *You know not your own hearts*; there is a great deal of the wilde Fire of revenge in this your motion, it's not well grounded zeal for God, therefore Christ saies, the son of man came not to destroy but to save them: and you know when they came to take him, in *Luk.* 22. 50, 51. *They came with Swords and Staves against him: and one of them smote the servant of the High Priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer thus far, and he touched his ear and healed him.*

him. But see how Christ bare not only with his Disciples, but even with his very enemies. But again,

5. Fifthly, You shall find that Christ in his life was exceeding compassionate, he was not only meek and patient, but he was exceeding compassionate: Oh! how often did the bowels of Christ yearn towards poor creatures? He never saw an object of pity, but his heart was drawn out to relieve, in *Matth.* 9. 36, 37. *But when he saw the multitude, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as Sheep without a Shepherd:* The very bowels of Christ were moved, he was filled with compassion towards their souls, nay, he was filled with compassion to the very bodies of men, in *Matth.* 14. 14, 15, 16. he takes care that they should not be sent away fasting, but makes provision for them, *Let them eat lest they should faint in the way.* When he beheld a poor obstinate sinner, his heart was drawn out in pity: the woman of *Samaria,* when she came first, she was a very jolly sinner, she laugh'd, but Christ pitied her, his bowels were towards her, and would not give her over till he made her to know that he was the true Messiah the Saviour of the World. When he saw a desolate soul, his bowels were drawn forth with abundance of tenderness and compassion; as in that woman that was accused, those that did there present her unto Christ laid a heavy accusation upon her, in *Joh.* 8. 10. *Jesus lifted up himself, and said unto the woman, where are those thine accusers?* The poor creature sat trembling at the feet of Christ, and she expected a fearful sentence of condemnation, but the bowels of Christ were drawn forth to pity and compassion: *Is there no man accuses thee?* What are they all gone that accuse thee? Well, *Neither do I accuse thee, go thy way and sin no more.* Now you see what

the

the life of Christ was; now I say, where the life of Christ is in any soul, it makes that soul some way answerable to the life of Christ in these particulars. It is true, the best of Saints come short, infinitely short of that which is their duty; but yet I say withal, that so far as the life of Christ prevails in his people, so far doth the life of Christ produce these operations, and it will bewail it self for its unlikeness to Christ in these particulars.

Object. But you will say, If the life of Christ produce these operations, where shall we find the life of Christ? If we look upon our selves we shall see sin, and if we look upon other Christians, where ever we look, there is so little of this to be found, that it is hard to say the life of Christ is in them.

Answ. 1. To this I answer, First of all, I do confess that Christians do mightily come short of that which is their duty, and therefore may take up a sad complaint and lamentation, they may lament over their own hearts, and lament over one another, and bewail their case; but yet let not them be disquiet, for I shall shew you, that the life of Christ may be in a soul, that is not so conspicuous in all these particulars. In way of answer, if you say that this is the life of Christ, the life of Christ is scarce to be found in any man in the world.

1. First of all, Let me tell you, the life of Christ is a hidden life. It is hid from themselves that it is not discerned; and as it is hid from themselves, so it is hid from others, that they cannot see the life of Christ in them, and especially it's hid from the men of the world, from a carnal man: there's the life of Christ, and the world cannot see it, the world cannot see the in-side of a Christian, he sees the out-side, but he cannot see the in-side, *The Kings Daughters are all glorious within:*

in: There are special times in which the life of Christ is hid in a Believer, that there may be life, though it may be others may not discern this life. As;

1. First of all, When God begins his work in a soul; the work of the Lord goes on gradually in the heart, step after step. You say *Rome* was not built in a day; even so the new *Jerusalem*, the beginnings of the life of Christ in a Christian, they are very small, sometimes they are scarce discerned; and therefore the *Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a grain of Mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds*; Ay, but afterward it springs up, (and you must not judge of the beginnings but of the latter end) the lattter end will be glorious: it is with a young Christian as it is with an Infant in the womb, when it begins first to live there is but a little, and but a very weak motion, that it can scarce be discerned whether it move or no, so is the life of Christ: it is like the tender plants and herbs that put forth in the spring, they are hardly discerned, hardly discerned from weeds, though you look upon them, though you pluck them, though you smell them, yet when they first put forth they do so smell of the earth, smell of the soil, as you cannot discern them: why, truly, so it is with the work of God upon the spirits of his people; look upon young Beginners, it's hard to be discerned, they smell so much of the soil, so much of corrupt nature that is not yet subdued, that it is hardly discerned, but yet there is the life of Christ in them. And so . . . .

2. Secondly, Again, In a time of temptation, in them (in whom the life of Christ is hid) it's hardly discerned; and you must not judge of a Christian in that time; I say, in time of temptation, for it's a time of Winter; now you know in time of Winter the life of the Tree is not discerned, there is no appearance

pearance of life in the Tree, but yet without doubt, there is life, there's life in the Tree, the life is still in the root, and it will put forth. Again,

3. Thirdly, A time of temptation is a time of swooning: it's as a man in a swoond, the operation of life ceases, it's out of view, ye can hardly discern that there is life, when a man is in a swoond, if you look upon him you see no symptoms of life, his countenance is changed, his lips are pale, death sits upon him; Ay, but let a skilful Physician come, and he shall feel some motion of the pulse, or some breathings of the nostrils, though it be very weak, that it will scarce move a Feather, yet there is some hope: why so take a poor soul that is under temptation, he is as in a swoond, you say there is no life in him, but yet let Christ the Physician come, and he will discern the pulse, and he will discern some motion, some movings of spirit, some breathings of heart, though it be not obvious to the view of others. Thus you see that the life of Christ is a hidden life, and therefore don't you say that there is not the life of Christ in such and such as profess themselves to be Christians, because you see not those operations, it may be Spring-time, or it may be Winter-time with them, or it may be a time of swooning; well, notwithstanding there is life, though thou discern'st it not.

2. But again, Secondly, to give another Answer, If this be the life of Christ, if the life of Christ doth produce such operation in the soul, when shall we find life?

Take this Answer, That though the life of Christ doth produce such operations in the soul where it is, yet the life of Christ is communicative to every one according to the place that every member is set in; you know the soul being in the body, doth inform every

part of the body, and it grows, but yet every member doth not grow alike, and one member hath more strength than another. Will you say, that the soul is not in the finger, because the finger hath not so much strength as the arm? Will you say, the soul is not in the foot, because it hath not the strength of the leg? Why thus, Brethren, it is with the body of Christ, all have not the same parts, and therefore all have not the same strength; though the same spirit of life that was in Jesus Christ doth inform the meanest of his members, though it doth not grow so big and so strong as in other members, yet the Lord hath provided (by this dispensation) to make up a sweet harmony in this body, that every member shall have its strength, and every member shall have its proportion, its growth and increase, according to the place it's set in: that it shall not be shrunk up in the body, nor extended above what is meet, but every member in the body of Christ shall have its strength, and its growth in proportion. But then,

3. Again, Thirdly, If you say that the life of Christ is such, where shall we find the life of Christ in any if it works so?

I Answer, The life of Christ doth not work eminently in every operation that is put forth in every Saint, but one Saint excels in one particular, and another in another, and herein is abundance of the wisdom of God; I say, the life of Christ runs in several veins; in one Christian it is more eminent in the vein or chanel of Faith, in another Christian there is the same life in the vein or chanel of humiliation, and self-denial; and in another it runs in the vein of prudence, holy wisdom and activity, so that you cannot say, there is not the life of Christ in such and such because you don't see an eminency in some particulars which it may

be

be you fasten upon; why, though the life of Christ be not eminent in that, it runs in another; in such a vein as is (as it were) under ground, as is not obvious to thy eye, which thou seest not; nor takest no notice of.

Quest. But you will say, Why is not every grace in its operation eminent; in every Saint, and in every Believer?

Answ. I Answer, First, Because the Lord will maintain in this way, a sweet communion with his Saints: the Lord intends to maintain sweet communion with his Saints, he therefore gives out to one, one grace more eminent, and to another, another, that so *the eye may not say to the head, I have no need of thee, nor the hand to the foot say, I have no need of thee:* So that every member shall have its proportion, but if you look upon the best Saints, you'l see how they come short of the life of Christ, how defective they are in this and that particular; what need then have we to live upon imputed righteousnes? And what need have we to keep in a continual dependance upon Christ, that so he may supply all our wants out of his fulnes?

2. Secondly, Again, The Lord doth with-hold his hand in abundance of wisdom and goodnes: if he should give too much, he knows what poor weak creatures we are, and what poor weak vessels we are, and if he should pour in too much, he knows we were not able to bear it; *If you pour new Wine into old Bottles, the Bottle will break*; and the Lord considers that we are old Bottles, and his new Wine would break our old Bottles, we are not able to contain much, if the Lord should give out much of himself, the visions of the Lord would break these old Bottles that we were not able to bear up. Christ tenders his people in this, that when they come to Heaven, he will fill them

full; then there is no fear of breaking their old bottles, he will fill them to the brim, and no fear of breaking: but now there's fear of the best of Saints; *Paul* had great raptures, and was exalted above measure, therefore 'tis to be marked, he had a check; but the life of Christ, and the strength of Christ doth not thus appear in eminency in every Saint.

Object. But some poor soul will say, Whatsoever there is in others, I will not judge others, the life of Christ may be in them, and I am perswaded the life of Christ is in such and such; I see the very Image of Christ in them, and these operations of life spoken of, I discern the life of Christ in others: But alas, I see nothing but deadness in my own soul, nothing but a body of sin and death; I say it's the burden of my soul every day I rise, *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death*, I fear the life of Christ is not in me?

Answ. Is not the life of Christ in you, Whence then are those complaints that thou makest? Did you ever hear a dead man complain, did you ever hear him cry out of his burden? Surely there is some life of Christ, or else whence are these complaints of that body of sin, that body of death which is more heavy to the soul than the burden of the Mountains? If the life of Christ be not in thee, whence are those desires? Thou breathest after Christ, ay, with all thy soul, thou couldst even expire, that the life of Christ might be more manifest, more evident in thee; why whence are those desires? Did you ever know a dead man breath? or the Pulse of a dead man beat? Surely these motions of the soul after Christ, these breathings of the heart after Christ do testifie there is something of the life of Christ; but if thou canst not find the life of Christ, and seest nothing but deadness, yet look towards him

as

as a living Saviour, let thine eye be towards him as one that is set up to give life; he is a Tree of life for this end that is in the midst of the Garden, and it's the Will of the Father that thou shouldst come to Christ: thou that art sensible that there is nothing but deadness in thee; come to Christ for life. Christ complains that *you will not come to me, that I may give you life*; you that complain of your deadness, give not Christ cause to complain that you will not come to him that he may give you life; therefore seeing the way of the Tree of life is not shut up, but it's set open, it's left open, there is no Cherubim set before thee, but come and eat, eat of the Tree of life and live; Christ presents himself to thy soul, that thou mightest put forth thy hand and eat of the Tree of Life, and though thou saiest thou hast not the life of Christ, yet look up to Christ that so thy soul may have life: and know for thy encouragement, that the time is coming, and is at hand, that more of the life of Christ shall be given out than ever it was unto the Saints; I say, it shall be as life from the dead when the Jews shall come in again, there shall be a new Resurrection, the people of God shall differ most exceedingly from what they were before; the time is hastning, and abundance of the life of Christ shall be communicated unto every member of Jesus Christ, and all the Saints, they shall die more to sin, die more to the world, and die more unto self, and shall live more unto God, and lift up the Son of God, for the day of the Lord is high, and shall be lifted up, for in that day the Lord alone shall be exalted. But so much for this time.

SERMON III.

PHILIP. 1. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

CHrist is the life of every Believer: I shewed you how the life of Christ works in every soul where it is, I come to the Application.

Use 1. First of all, Let it be a word of Examination. Know it's not enough to have a name to live if Christ be not the principle of life; it's possible (as I have shewed you heretofore) that the children of the Kingdom may be cast out into utter darkness, to have a name and only a name to live, it will do men little good: therefore I beseech you, examine whether the life of Christ be in you or no; whence came your life first? What way came into your soul that life which you have? Did it come by hearing the voice of Christ? That life which is from Christ comes into the soul by hearing the voice of Christ, in *Joh.* 5. 25. *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live:* There is no man that lives, but he shall hear the voice of the Son of God; can you say that the life

that

that was in you, it was thus brought into your souls, it was by the voice of the Son of God, it was Christ spake, Christ spake in your souls, and you were revived; it was Christ in a Promise, or Christ in an Ordinance, or Christ in the breathings of his spirit; Ay, you know it was Christ that spake, for you were so sensibly, deeply sunk in unbelief, you were so dead, that if an Angel from Heaven should have sounded a Trumpet, you could not have heard, nor have believed the Gospel. Ay, you know it was the voice of Christ, for you heard the same word many a time, the same promise was given in; you read it, you heard it, it was urged upon you, and yet you found no life in it, but when Christ spake, then your spirit was revived. Nay, you are perswaded it was the voice of Christ, for it was at such a time when you were fartheſt off from light, then was your spirit revived; when your condition was, those dead and dry bones which the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks of in *Ezek.* 37. you were furtheſt from life, when not only the flesh was consumed, but the bones were dry, scattered and consumed, even in such a spiritual sense were you broken, and when the Word of Christ came to your soul you were revived from this Word of the Lord, and therefore certainly it was Christ that spake, I cannot but assent unto it: the life of Christ that thus comes in by the voice of the Son of God, it's Christ in the soul.

2. Secondly, Again, Did not this life come in in a way of dying? I say, did it not come in in a way of dying? For so is the life of Christ; where the life of Christ is, it kills the creature, it strikes him stark dead, the creature is nothing, it dies to self, it dies to his own righteousness, it dies to his own strength, to his own wisdom, have you thus found it? Thus it was

with Christ, the life that he purchased for his people, he purchased it by his death, it was made evident in a way of dying: when he arose from the Grave, then it was evident, and he is declared with power that he was the Son of God; life came in by death in a way of dying: and truly, thus it is with a soul where the life of Christ is, when Christ comes the soul dies, it saies as Christ said, when he was ready to give up the Ghost, in *Luk.* 23. 46. *Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit*; so that soul where the life of Christ comes in, expires into God, the soul expires into God, into the hands of God, the creature becomes nothing, it desires to be nothing, nothing in it self, content that the creature should be dead, look'd upon as dead, that God alone should be exalted, that he should be all unto it, and that it should be all in all unto him; thus the life of Christ, where it comes into the soul in this way.

3. Thirdly, But again, Examine *how your life is maintained*; if the life of Christ be in you, *How is that life of Christ in you, that spiritual life maintained?* the life that is from Christ is maintained by Christ, it came in at first *by the voice of the Son of God, and so it's maintained by the voice of God*, and every time that Christ speaks, it's further into life, every time that Christ speaks in a promise, every time that Christ speaks in an Ordinance, it runs further into life, and every day it's dying, the life of Christ is increasing, and triumphs in the victory, by killing and slaying the creature to it self in its own apprehension, and it's maintained by the voice of Christ, or by a sight of Christ, so that where this life of Christ is, the soul in all its deadness runs to Christ; when it wants life at any time, it looks to Christ for it, it runs to Christ for this life, Lord maintain this life. A soul

hath

hath its life from the Father originally, instrumentally from God, and it depends upon the Father for life, and where the soul is begotten by God, its life being in Christ, it's maintained by Christ, and it never lives so well as when it sees most of Christ, it's a sight of the glory and beauty of Christ, of the grace of Christ, and love of Christ that doth mightily affect the heart, and raise the spirits of the soul, it is mightily stirred up, the operations of the soul are stirred up, and it looks upon Christ and it's revived, it looks upon Christ and is strengthened, and is beholding the glory and strength of Christ, is most ready to act for Christ, and to work for Christ, whenas the soul hath much of Christ in his eye. Well, is your life thus maintained? certainly this is the life of Christ.

Use 2. But if I would speak in a way of discovery unto poor creatures that are without the life of Christ: It will be an easie Test unto the discovery of many that they are without the life of Christ.

How many poor creatures in the world death sits on their fore-heads, upon their faces! Christ is not their life, but the world is their life, and their lusts is their life, and the creature is their life, for they live upon these, the life of many a poor soul is bound up in these, his life is bound up in the world, and bound up in his lusts, and if the world be taken from him, or his lusts taken from him, he cries out, O he is undone, what hath he more? And what will God do him good, or Christ do him good, or communion with the spirit do him good? his lusts are his life, and his life is taken away when he is robbed of his lusts. When a man doth live to the satisfaction of his lusts, and makes them the whole end of his living, not to lift up God and Christ, but to live to the satisfaction of the lusts of his heart, I say, here it is an easie matter to say without breach

of

of the law of love, the Lord be merciful to such poor creatures, for the life of Christ is not in them, they lay rotting in their Graves of sin, their throat is an open Sepulchre, there's no appearance of the life of Christ in such. And therefore I shall desire the Lord would convince such poor creatures, how miserable their condition is without the life of Christ: they are like so many dead Carkasses, and what a sad object is that, to look upon so many men as dead carkasses though they be never so lively, never so full of strength, activity, and of beauty here before the eye of the World, yet in relation to the invisible World, which is many thousand times more considerable, such men are as dead carcasses, I say, in the eye of God and of his Angels, and the rest of the Inhabitants of the invisible World, such poor creatures are as dead carkasses, as dreadful an object to them as a walking Ghost is to you: a carkass that lies rotting in the Grave where there is nothing but putrefaction, it is a noysom, an offensive object, every one turns away from it; and truly every one is such, who is a sinner, an obstinate sinner, the Lord cannot away with them, that if they continue in trespasses and sins, being dead in sins and trespasses, the Lord will bury them out of his sight, there wants nothing but a burying them out of the sight of God to make their misery compleat; rejection from the presence of God, to be cast out of the sight of God, and his presence for ever, never to behold his face in glory, and communion with him, it shall be the completion of the misery of such poor wretches: And therefore I shall desire you in the fear of God to look after the life of Christ; O that the Lord would perswade you to look after the life of Christ, *He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life*; Look after Christ

Christ for life; O that you would consider the excellency of the life of Christ, is it not worth the seeking after? Shall I set it out to you, by comparing the life of Christ with natural life, which is accounted most excellent in this lower world, and you shall see how infinitely excellent the life of Christ is? What is the most excellent thing in the World, the best thing in nature? Why life, natural life is the best thing in nature; *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life:* the least worm is more excellent than the Sun in that respect, because it hath life, life is most excellent in its nature: But now compare the life of nature with the life of Christ, and you shall see how far it goes beyond it, and therefore infinitely more desirable than the life of nature. For,

1. First of all, The life of Nature is *a vain life*, a life full of vanity: *Eve* was convinced thereof by that time she brought forth a second Son, she called his name *Abel*, that is vanity; she now knew that was the condition and case of the sons and daughters of fallen man, of all she brought forth, with all the world that followed her, their lives shall be vanity, *Man walks in a vain shadow, in a vain shew*, Psal. 39. 5, 6. Surely every man walks in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain: the life of Nature is full of vanity, it appears in that it satisfieth not; it is empty and vain, for it proves many times a burden, even vanity: life it self, which is the most excellent thing in nature, it proves a burden if you declare the vanity of it: and so many times it is so to the wicked, and to the Godly. Life is a burden to the wicked: there is a principle in nature in a man to live, to desire to live, to live alwaies, and yet man many times is weary to live; the wicked man would live long, and yet his life is a burden, he would live longer, he never dies willingly, though sometimes

times he be the instrument of his own destruction, he dies not willingly; It is said of the wicked man, *That he shall not live out half his daies*; Why, though they may live longer than the righteous, though he live a hundred years, yet he may not live out half his daies, he desires to live long, and yet life is a burden to him, here is a vanity: especially when the Lord shall break in upon his soul with apprehensions of wrath, and when he meets with vexations and disquietments from the world, many times he speaks against his life, and acts against his life, which is a great sin: here's a vanity.

Nay, natural life is a burden many times to Gods own people; you may see how it comes short of the life of Christ, though it is the most excellent thing in nature, yet it is a burden to the Saints; the corruption that is within their own hearts, which doth follow them all the time of life, makes life a burden: *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?* The workings of corruption have made his very life a burden to him, who shall deliver him from it? And so through the temptation of Satan the life is made burdensome, through the evil of the times, through the dishonour that is brought to God in the world, whilst they look upon it their life is made a burden to them; *Lot*'s righteous soul was vexed, his life was a burden to him: though they dare not think against their lives, and act against their lives, yet many times life is a burden to Gods own people, not but that they are willing to bear their burden whilst God is pleased to let them live here. But now,

Turn your eye to Christs life, and you shall see the life of Christ is full of satisfaction, full of contentment: It's full of satisfaction, you don't say of that as sometimes *Job* said of his life, you may see in *Job* 7. 15, 16.

15, 16. he was under sore temptation, and in great affliction, *I loath it, I would not live alway*; why *Job* never said so of the life of Christ, he never said of that, *I loath it, I would not live alway*; No, on the contrary, a gracious heart saies thus, I love it, I delight in it, I would live alway, let me live to Eternity, to lift up the name of God, to behold his Glory, to wait at his foot-stool, to extol his glorious name for ever and ever; thus you see how contrary the life of Christ is unto the life of nature, in respect of the vanity of it.

2. But again, Secondly, The life of Nature is *a sinful life*, and that makes it worse than vanity; sin doth accompany it all along, yea in its first rise, in its first being, *In sin was I conceived*, saies *David*. A man that hath nothing but the life of nature lives to nothing but to sin: he lives to dishonour God, he lives to wound and to destroy himself, he lives to do hurt in the world, in injury to others; and these are the fruits that nature brings forth: but the life of Christ is pure and holy, it's without sin, there is no principle of corruption in it; and therefore it never dies, it never expires, it hath no principle of corruption in it self, but it is pure as the life of God is pure. But again,

3. Thirdly, The life of Nature is *a miserable life*; it's full of misery; see how *Job* speaks of it, speaking of the life of Nature, he saies, *That man is born to misery as the sparks flie upward*, that is, Naturally: the sparks naturally flie upward, and so there is all the portion that a man is born unto by nature; if he hath any besides his misery, it's besides his portion, he hath more than he was born to, for he was born to misery: But the life of Christ hath no sorrow in it, for he that is born again to God, is born to happiness, he is born to joy, he is born to glory, even *as the sparks flie upward*; this is the portion that he is born

to,

to, and if he comes short of this, it's accidental, because he comes short of the life of Christ, if he comes short of this glory and joy in the Holy Ghost, it's because he comes short of the life of Christ, for the life of Christ shall be compleated in Heaven, where it shall not be interrupted in its actings, then there shall be nothing but peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; there shall be then no sorrow, for all tears shall be wiped away: this is the excellency of the life of Christ. Again,

4. Fourthly, The life of Nature is *a decreasing life:* it decreases as soon as ever it comes into the world, as soon as ever a man begins to live, *He comes up, and is cut down like a flower:* The Candle consumes as soon as it is lighted: and even thus is the life of Nature; and it's like a Garment that is eaten with the Moths, it's continually decreasing and waxing worse and worse. There are so many worms at the root of the Tree, gnawing at the root of our Tree, that as soon as ever we spring above ground, our natures decrease continually: but the life of Christ is an increasing life, there is a period beyond which a Christian shall not grow, he doth not come to his height, and then go downward, there is no period in his growth so long as he is on this side Heaven, there is no old age in which his life decreaseth; it's true, the operations of life may be destroyed in a Christian, but the principle of life increases continually: and therefore the promises are made that they shall be as Trees which *bring forth fruit in old age*; and *that they shall grow from strength to strength, until they come to appear before him in Sion*; and thus in the strength of Christ they shall go from strength to strength, which is far more excellent than the life of Nature.

5. But again Fifthly, The life of nature *is an uncertain life*: there is no man hath any lease of life, but

our

our times are in the Lords hand, and there is no man living hath certainty of life for a moment: It's true, the Fool in the Gospel makes large promises, and makes a large lease to himself of that which was not his own, he would lease out life for years, for many years, but he reckoned without his Land-lord, and you know that that night his soul was taken from him. Of all things in the world, life is the most uncertain thing, but the life of Christ that Christ gives is most certain, it is a life that cannot be taken away: it is as sure to a Christian as the life of Christ in Heaven is sure, a Christian can no more die than Christ can die, *Because I live*, saies he, *ye shall live also*; as sure as I live, ye shall live also; as my life is certain, so your life also is certain; for *your life shall no man take from you*. Though there be many that seek to take away a Christians life, yet none shall be able to do it. 1. The *World* shall not rob them of life, *Be of good comfort I have overcome the world*, saies Christ. 2. Sin is another enemy to the life of Christ, but yet it shall not prevail. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace*; there's the bond of the Lords faithfulness. Again, 3. *Satan* is another enemy to the life of Christ, but he shall not prevail neither, *Christ hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, and hath triumphed over them*; for it is said, the *Lord Jesus shall tread down Satan under your feet shortly*, that the life of Christ shall not be taken from you; here is the excellency of it. Again,

6. Sixthly, The life of nature *is a deceitful life*, both for time and continuance, and also for the comforts of it; it promises a great deal but performs little or nothing: riches, and honour, and pleasures, and the rest of the good things of natural life; it promiseth much but performs little: but when the creature comes

to

to experience, as *Solomon* did, why, he is deceived, deceived in his expectation, for he finds nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit: let a man try, if he will, he shall never find so much comfort as it promiseth him; but the life of Christ is no whit deceitful, it doth not promise more than it performs, there is alwaies more found in the enjoyment of the life of Christ than was promised, and more than the soul did ever expect; how often doth the poor soul cry out (with the Queen of *Sheba*) that is taken up into the Mount and sees Christ transfigured; Do but behold a little of his glory, she cries; behold there was no spirit left in her when she saw *Solomon*'s house, for she did not believe what was told to the half of what she saw; Why, so when the life of Christ is given out to the soul, you shall find more than ever was told; God will be more and better in the performance than he was in the promise; and truly, the life and glory of Christ is *Incomprehensible* in respect of the creature, the largest capacity and understanding, though inlightened and sanctified, is not able to take in the least part of the glory of the life of Christ, it's not able to comprehend the notion of it, much less the life it self, the great discoveries of it shall be reserved for heaven, and then it shall be found of all Saints that the life of Christ was not like the life of man, there was no deceitfulness in it. But to say no more:

7. Seventhly, The life of Nature *is a momentany life*; therefore often compared in Scripture to things that are not, or are gone in a moment; the breath, the shadow, the wind that passeth away, there's no continuance, it comes up and is cut down: there is no continuance compared with Eternity, it's but a moment, the longest life is but a passage, there's no stay, it's but a Bridge to go over, it's but a Bridge to Eternity; life is but a moment, but now the life of Christ is an eternal life,

life, the life that Christ gives to the soul is eternal, he that lives in Christ, and with Christ, shall live for ever, it shall never be taken away, it shall never be blown out, but the soul that hath the life of Christ, shall live as long as Christ lives, it can no more die, than Christ can die; now he died but once, and being risen from the dead, he can die no more, but he lives for ever and ever; and thus is the life of Christ when ever it is communicated to a soul, that soul can die no more, it hath died when Christ died, and therefore shall die no more, but it shall live; it shall live even to Eternity, and to Eternity it shall lift up the name of God and Christ. You see how excellent the life of Christ is, how far it surpasses the life of nature; every man desires to live, and to live long, because the life of nature is apprehended to be excellent; but you have seen what a poor life it is without the life of Christ: it's a poor, vain, sinful, miserable, wretched, decreasing, uncertain, deceitful, momentany life: O that that which hath been spoken of the life of Christ, might stir up all your hearts to enquire the way of life, that you may sit and wait at the foot-stool, and wait for the givings out of his life, for he came to this end that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly.

SERMON IV.

PHILIP. 1. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

DOCT.

Christ is a Believers Life.

THat's the Proposition in hand: I have concluded the Doctrinal part the last day, and I made Application. I put you upon examination, to see whether the life of Christ be in you or no: It is not enough to have a name to live, for many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with *Abraham*, when the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into utter darkness; and therefore you that have a name to live, examine whether is Christ your life or no. But to proceed by way of Instruction,

Use 3. Let us take notice, in the third place, of the excellent state of every Believer; I say, take notice of the excellent state of every Believer that is made partaker of the life of Jesus Christ. If the life of nature be so excellent, and makes the creature

so

so excellent in its kind, why then how excellent is this life of Christ, which is communicated and made over unto his people? I say, the life of nature is so excellent, as that the least worm that creeps upon the earth, is of more noble account than the Sun in the Firmament; the most inanimate creature in all the world is worth the Sun, in respect of its life; truly, the meanest of Saints, he that is least in his own eye, and it may be, in the eye of the world, he is most excellent in the eye of God, in the eye of Saints and Angels; I say, in the eye of the invisible world, he is more excellent than the greatest man on earth, that shines with the greatest worldly glory that can be, for why? this little worm hath life, this worm *Jacob* hath life; whereas a natural man is dead, and without life; in *Eccles.* 9. 4. *A live Dog is better than a dead Lion*; Why, Brethren, it is true in this sense also; the woman of *Canaan* knew she was called Dog, and so she was in respect of her outward condition, for she was one of the out-cast Gentiles, a stranger to the children, not worthy to eat of the crumbs of the Table; but though she was a Dog, she was a living Dog, and though a Dog, yet she was accounted by Christ far better than the great Rabbies of the World, she was a living Dog, though they were but dead Lions, and she shall shine in the Firmament, whenas the dead Lions of the World shall rot and their carkasses; the living Shrub that shall grow and flourish, when the dead Oak shall be cut down and made fuel for the fire. And therefore, I beseech you Brethren, that you would learn by this how to judge of your selves, and how to judge of others, and not according to that mean condition that (happily) God hath cast you in, in the World; but by that principle of life which is within you: if Christ be your life, if Christ be in

You the hope of Glory, why, though in respect of your natural life and outward accommodations, your life is but as the life of a worm, yet your spiritual life being in you, is a life better than the life of Angels, which is a spark of the life of Christ himself, of God himself; which though their life be hid, it's hid with God in Christ, *And when Christ who is your life shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in Glory*; and therefore notwithstanding all those hinderances of Clouds in the World that are cast upon you, yet know that this your life is hid with Christ in God. So much by way of Instruction.

Use 4. A word of Exhortation, And first of all I shall speak unto such as are strangers unto the life of Christ. And Secondly, To those in whom Christ is a principle of life.

1. First of all, To those that are strangers to the life of Christ. My desire and request is, That the Lord would cause you to come to Christ for life, the Father hath made him the principle of life unto all that shall live in his sight; you that are dead in sins and trespasses, that it may be easily seen and said of you, that the World is your life, and that your lusts are your life, that your life is bound up in creatures, and not in Christ; I beseech you, that you would this day come to Christ that he may give you life; know it, that the Lord doth this day tender life to you, the Lord Christ stands weeping over you in this Ordinance, as sometimes he wept over *Lazarus*, in *John* 11. 35. *Jesus wept*. And truly I may say, Christ stands weeping over you; poor sinners that are standing with your trespasses and sins, the Lord Christ stands weeping over you, he sounds forth this Word, Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life: know that you are in a

dead

dead sleep; such as are strangers to the life of Christ, they are like men in a sleep; they are filled with fancies and dreams, and conceits, that they have life and strength, righteousnes and glory, they dream of a Feast, but when they awake they are hungry; thou conceitest thou art Rich, and stand'st in need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor, miserable, blind and naked: now it is to you that the Lord saies, *Arise, awake thou that sleepest*; it is high time we should awake, the Apostle saies, *The night is past, the day is at hand, and therefore it is high time that men should awake*; there is a glorious day that the Gospel shall now shine, in which the Lord makes gracious discoveries of himself; light shines round about you, and therefore awake thou that sleepest: It is a shame for men to lie a bed Sleeping and Snorting when the Sun shines on their faces, and calls them to labour: what a shame is it for men to lie asleep in the day of the Gospel, when the Sun hath risen and visited our coasts? O know! the Lord bids thee to awake, and stand up from the dead thou that sleepest; I beseech you, be not found amongst the dead; when God shall find you amongst the dead, for him then to cast you among the dead, and bury you out of his sight, cast you for ever out of his sight to Eternity; O let this awaken your souls, when God calls you to awake.

Object. But you will say, If we be dead men, why do you speak to us? Can the dead arise? Can the dead hear the voice? Why do you bid us stand up and awake, if we be as dead men?

Answ. I Answer, It is true there is no principle of life in a natural man: the Lord doth not speak to you, because you have a principle of life in you,

he doth not speak to you, because you have life in you, but he speaks that so you may live, he speaks that so he may convey life to you, for you must know that the Lord Jesus is the Prince of life, he is the Lord of life, he can command life, he gives life by his Word, he gives life by the breath of his mouth; and therefore know it is not an empty word, when the Lord calls upon you to live and to stand up, for he that speaks to you is the Lord of life. When Christ spake to *Lazarus*, *Come forth*, he knew *Lazarus* had no power of himself to come forth, but when he speaks, he gives life to *Lazarus* and enables him to live, and to arise, and so he comes out of his Grave; Why, so it is, the Lord Jesus speaks and call upon you to live, and he will give you life: it is the prerogative of God, he calls things that are not, as if they were; he speaks to dead men as if they were alive; and when the Lord speaks he acts upon the souls there is an effectual operation in the Spirit of Christ that goes along to the giving of life to every soul that belongs unto God by the Word of the Lord. If a man go to a heap of Wood, and he commands the Wood to burn, he may command long enough before he shall see any such effect upon it; but if this man take fire in his hand, fire in one hand, and bellows in the other, and lay fire to the wood, and blow upon the fire, he shall presently see it arise up to a flame: And thus the Lord speaks his Word is not an empty Word, but he carries fire along with it: when he saies, O soul live! O soul be inflamed with desire after it! this is not an empty word, but there is efficacy goes along with it, the Lord pours out (going along with it) pours out a spirit of burning, and breaths upon the same Word, with command that sparks be blown up to a mighty

mighty flame; so that the Lord speaks, and when he speaks, his words are not in vain; when he speaks that he would have you to live, do not you make objections against the life of Christ, do not say we are dead creatures, how should we live? Consider what *Abraham* did; it is said, *He considered not his own body, when it was dead, neither the deadness of Sarahs womb*; he did not look upon it, in *Rom.* 4. 19. *Not being weak in Faith*; it is said he considered not his own body now dead, dead as to generation, nor the deadness of *Sarahs* womb, but he eyed the Word of the Lord, the faithfulness and truth of God in his Word, he lookt to the all-sufficiency of that God which had promised, he knew that he was able to perform what he had spoken, though it seemed never so unlikely unto sense, therefore *he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but he was strong in faith giving glory to God*: and so also you poor creatures, do not look so much upon your own deadness, but know that God can out of very stones raise up children unto *Abraham*, he can quicken thee by the Word of his mouth, and the breath of his nostrils: though thou liest before him as *Adam* did, who was as a lump of clay, liveless and useless, but the Lord made a body thereof, and made it to become a living body; though thou art dead, the Lord can breath life in thee by the Word of his Spirit, and so it shall burn unto Eternity; all the life and breathings, and motions of the Spirit after the Lord, these are kindled by the Spirit of the Lord: therefore look not so much after thine own deadness, but look to the faithfulness of him that hath promised, that thou maist not stagger at the Promise through unbelief.

Object. But I am not only without the life of Christ, saith some poor guilty sinner, but I have

been an enemy to the life of Christ, I have opposed the life of Christ both in my own soul and others; I have smothered those motions of the Spirit, that he hath often cast in, I have persecuted the appearances of the life of Christ in others, and the Lord cause me to lie under the apprehension of the guilt of it, and now I am ready to think and conclude that I am cast out of sight, the time of life is past, and the Lord hath for ever excluded me, and shut me under death, darkness and horror; I shall not see the life of Christ.

Answ. Why even to thee let me say that eternal life is the free gift of God, I say, this life is the free gift of God, there is no gift more free than this life which God doth impart unto poor sinners: It was said *when Christ ascended up on high, he led Captivity Captive, and he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also, that God might dwell amongst them:* Christ received life for Rebels, he received gifts for Rebels, and this was not the least of gifts, this was the greatest of gifts that Christ received for Rebels, this gift of life; and therefore you shall see how Christ gave life unto that evil generation that did so persecute him even to the very death; though they cut him off from the Land of the living, as not being worthy to live among them, yet to many of those that were the chief actors, the chief instruments of the Crucifying of the Lord of life, there was life given them; as we may see by those that were converted at *Peter's* Sermon, and made partakers of the death of Christ and life of Christ; the Apostle tells them in *Acts* 2. 23. *He was delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have Crucified and slain:* And afterwards in that Chapter

you

you shall read that even those he speaks to here, at Verse 37. were converted, life was dispensed to them, pardon to them, mercy to them, grace to them, even to them that had with wicked and cruel hands slain and crucified the Lord of life and glory; and therefore also Christ saies in *John 6. That he came to give his life for the World; he gave his flesh for the life of the world*; the world that lay in wickedness, that was in darkness, that was filled with enmity against Christ, and against his people whilst they were here in the world; Christ gave his fleth to be life unto the world, therefore see that eternal life is the gift of God: he gives it so freely to Rebels, to such who had their hands embrewed in his blood, that had with wicked hands crucified and slain him. See what a door of Hope is set open for poor guilty sinners that they may come in and be made partakers of this life of Christ.

Object. But it may be that soul will further Object and say; I have not only been an enemy to the life of Christ, but I have continued so long dead in sins and trespasses, that when I look upon my condition, it seems unto me like unto the state of dead and dry bones, and I am ready to say, Is it possible that such dead and dry bones should live, that have lain so long in the Grave of sin, so long rotting and stinking in their lusts, is it possible that such should live?

Answ. Let me tell you. That the Lord carries on his work, though under great disadvantages; that Parable or Vision that was represented to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, concerning the Jews, is very remarkable, in *Ezek.* 37. 3. *And he said unto me, Son of man can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord, thou knowest*; Go Prophesie upon them, and the

Lord

Lord saies then he would give life unto them: I know no way how they shall live, it is beyond the reach of the creature to know, thou art infinite in wisdom and power, O Lord thou knowest the way how to give life and being to them; Well, saies God, they shall live; the Lord often gives life to such poor creatures in such a condition when they are like unto dead and dry bones, when furthest from life: the skin was not only broken, and the flesh consumed, and the bones loosned and disjointed, but they were scattered abroad, broken and dry, and so they were in such an estate as was farthest off from life, but even then the Lord delights to communicate life. When *Lazarus* had lain four daies in the Grave, then the Lord Christ raised him up, he could have raised him as soon as his breath had gone out, but the Lord Christ let him go four daies, when he seemed to be farthest off from life, when his sister had said, *Lord by this time he stinketh*; saies Christ unto her, *Did not I tell thee, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?* What saies Christ to the poor soul, when the soul saith, Lord I have lain so long stinking in my lusts, and how is it possible I should believe? *Have not I told thee* (as he said to *Martha*) *that if thou wouldest believe, thou shalt see the glory of God,* the glory of his Power and the glory of his Grace, to give life to these dry bones? So say I to you, notwithstanding all these discouragements, go and wait upon the Lord, and sit at the foot-stool of Christ and wait for the giving out of life, and know that Christ said, *The hour is come when they that are in their Graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live:* Sit down at Christs foot, and wait to hear his voice, hearken diligently when Christ will speak, and what Christ will speak to thy soul, for certainly the hour is come when such as are

in

in their Graves shall live: wait for the voice of Christ, and wait for the pourings out of the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of life, and the Spirit of faith that may carry up thy soul to believe in Jesus Christ, and know that he is the Resurrection and the Life, and though thou beest never so dead in thy self, yet by faith in Christ thou shalt live. Thus much to those that are strangers to the life of Christ.

Let me speak a word to those that have interest in Christ.

Use 5. If Christ be your life, then I beseech you, that you would live upon Christ, fetch life from Christ, let it appear to all the world that Christ is your life; let it appear in all your actings, in your conversings with God, and in your conversations in the world. O that you would make Christ your life! What a shame is it that Christians should live no more upon Christ? see that you look unto him as your life, as your life of *Righteousness*, as your life of *Holiness*, as the life *of all your Comforts*, as the life of *all Ordinances*; live upon Christ, upon the strength of Christ in all your works, and in all your duties: it's a blessed frame of spirit when the soul can say as the Apostle did, in *Gal.* 2. 20. *I live*, saies he, *and yet not I, but Christ lives in me.* When a man can say it is I, and yet not I, it's Christ that lives in me, it's the Spirit of Christ that speaks in me, and it's the strength of Christ that acts in me, it's the arm of Christ that supports me, and it's the wisdom of Christ that guides me: it's no more I that live, it's not I that work, but it's the Spirit of Christ that doth all this in me, and for me: why then I fear we are debtors to this exhortation, and what a shame is it that we should live so little upon Christ, that we should live so much upon the creature, and so much upon self? Truly, the

the Lord may take up a complaint against most of this Generation, as sometimes he did against his people *Israel*; *These people had committed two great evils, they had forsaken me the fountain of living water, and digged to themselves broken Cisterns:* To go for the living amongst the dead, to live so much upon creatures, to live so much upon outward things, for a Christian to have his life bound up in them, so as he knows not how to live without them; and saies, if I lose such a comfort, and am deprived of such a relation, O I am undone for ever; what a dishonour is this to Christ, and to that principle of life that is in you? That your life should be bound up in any creature whatsoever: know that a Christian cannot be undone; so long as Christ lives he lives, Christ can die no more, and therefore his life cannot be put out; the life of his righteousness, and the life of his comforts shall not die, they shall be put out no more than the life of Christ is. Therefore let me desire that you would look to Christ for an abundance of life, I say, look to Christ for abundance of life; it is not enough that Christ be a principle of life in you, but a Believer should look to Christ for abundance of life, it was the end of his coming, *I came that they might have life*, saies he, *and that they might have it more abundantly:* Christ came that his people might have abundance of life, and therefore do not straiten your selves, be not straitened in your own bowels, when you are not straitened in Christ, you are not straitened in your principle, *With thee is the fountain of life*, saith the Psalmist, *and therefore in thy life we shall see life:* The fountain of life is in Christ, and therefore there is abundance of life for all Believers; there is no man need to make spare of the fountain head, if a man be owner of a fountain, surely he need not

make

make spare, he may drink abundantly, hearty draughts, and not to sip when he hath a fountain to go to: with Christ is a fountain of life, he is a fountain, and *a fountain set open*; therefore I beseech you go to Christ for abundance of life, let all your actings be proportionable to that principle of life that is in you: What a shame is it that we should have a living head in Heaven, I say; a living head, and that we should be such dead members? O that the Lord would cause all our souls to look unto this Fountain, that so we may be filled and satisfied. What do you more than others? saies Christ unto his people. There is some singular thing that Christ expects his people should do, they have a principle above others, and therefore their actings should be above others; the life of a Christian or a Believer, is as much above the life of the natural man, as the life of man is above the life of beasts, or the life of a Tree or a Plant; and therefore the operation of their life is far more excellent: what a shame is it that it should be said of a Christian, such as profess the life of Christ, what do they more than others? Wherein do they differ from the World? What difference betwixt them, and those that have their portion in this life? O my Brethren, if Christ be your life, then let all the breathings, and motions of your spirits be high, noble, and lifted up, let them be carried after God, and let all the actings of your spirits be in a proportion to that principle of life that is in you to Christ, who is your hope of glory.

But again, I beseech you, take heed that you do nothing against the life of Christ that is in you: It is a sin for a man to act against his life, against his natural life, to do that which may shorten his life,

life, to do that which may hinder the comfort of life; and if so, then what an evil is it to act against the life of Christ, seeing the life of Christ is far more excellent than the life of Nature, as you heard before; it cost Christ dear, that life which he communicates to his people, it cost him his blood, it was not purchased without the laying down of his life, and therefore take heed that you do not act against him: Let Christians take heed that they do not neglect communion with God; neglecting of communion, and sleighting of communion, is an acting against the life of Christ in them; for why, the life of Christ comes in that way, it is maintained by the souls conversing with God, and therefore when a man turns his eye so from God, when he is looking downward, continually poring upon the things of this World, neglecting the things of Eternity, and does not eye God, and does not converse with God in all Ordinances and Duties, why this is an obstructing of the life of Christ in you.

Again, Take heed of giving way to any vanity, take heed of making bonds with sin, that you do not step out from God in the least, it is destructive to the operation of the life of Christ, sin weakens the inward man, as sicknesses and diseases do the body; take away the natural strength, that a man cannot act with that strength as before: so it is with sin, when the soul gives way to lusts and corruptions whatever they be, he weakens his own strength, he entertains fellowship with that which is an enemy to the life of Christ in him.

And then take heed of giving way to sinful passions and unbelief, and dejection of spirit, for these also are great enemies to the life of Christ; I say, dejection of spirit is an enemy to the life of Christ,

as well as to the life of Nature: therefore reason with your passions, as sometimes *David* did, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me?* Know that he hath made you Kings, he hath set you upon the Throne that you may judge your own hearts: that holy and sanctified reason may call all your inordinate lusts and passions to account in thy soul, and say as *David* did, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?* Take heed of neglecting Ordinances, of sleighting Ordinances, it is by them that the life of Christ is maintained and cherished, they are the Pipes, they are the Golden Pipes, though empty in themselves, yet they are the Pipes through which the Lord is pleased to convey life; and therefore the sleighting of Ordinances, and casting of them off, must needs make way for the hinderance of the life of Christ: Christians should take heed, I say, in any case, that they do not that which may be an obstruction to the life of Christ, to the actings, and to the motion of the life of Christ in them.

Again, To say no more, Let all Believers consider what matter of consolation the Lord hath laid up for them in this, in that he hath made Christ to be their life; I say, what matter of strong consolation is it in the midst of all their deaths and dangers, in the midst of all their miseries, in the midst of all their corruptions and enemies, that they are compast about with here in the World? Here is a hidden ground of consolation: There is a principle of life in them; Christ is their principle of Life, and such a principle as shall never decay in them, they have such a life as endures for ever; Why, it is comfort in the midst of all the want of outward necessaries; if Christians want, they have a more excellent

cellent life than creatures, and if creatures say natural life is better than raiment, then how much more may it be said of spiritual life that it is better than food and raiment, and all outward things below? And so in the midst of all afflictions that do lie upon Gods people at any time, they may comfort themselves with that hidden life that is within them, though the World see not, the world takes no notice of it, the Lord looks upon them as excellent because of that life that is within them: yea, even death it self, the people of God may comfort themselves as *Job* did in the thoughts of death, in the apprehension of death, though it seem never so terrible, they have a living Saviour; they who have interest in Christ, he is a principle of life unto them: *I know that my Redeemer lives, and I shall see him again at the last day*, saies *Job*, he lives, and he will be life to me, I shall stand up with him, and I shall live in his sight, this was that which *Job* did solace his soul in, in the midst of all those afflictions, in the thoughts of death it self, when it was presented to him as the King of terrors, yet let the Saints rejoice in this life, for it is such a life as shall never be put out, though it be compassed about: it is a life that is compassed about with enemies; and all that is in a man, and all that is without him, are enemies to the life of Christ; O how many temptations, and how many lusts and corruptions do beset it round about every day? Well, here is comfort to every one to whom Christ is a principle of life, that this life of Christ shall prevail, and it shall continue to see all its enemies put under its feet, thou shalt live to see them all put under thy feet; Christ indeed when he came in the flesh, was persecuted in his very infancy, he was driven into a strange

Country,

Country, but he lived to see his enemies put under, in *Matth.* 2. 19. the Angel comes and tells *Joseph*, he may return with safety, for they are dead which sought the young Child's life, to destroy him: it shall one day be said so unto every Believer, to every soul that hath interest in the life of Christ, though for a time they may be persecuted, and hurryed and driven up and down with the lusts and corruptions of their hearts and this wicked world, yet it shall be said one day, *Lo, they are dead which sought the Childs life:* But so much for this time.

SERMON V.

PHILIP. 1. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

I Have concluded the first of these Propositions, *That Jesus Christ is a Believers life.* But I shall proceed to a second Proposition in the Text.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I shall propound it as exemplary unto all the Saints.

DOCT.

That it is worthy your imitation to converse with Death at a distance; to prepare for Death before Death comes.

You shall find it the practice of the Saints in Scripture: so did *Moses*, and so did *David*; *Moses* as you have it recorded in *Psal.* 90. 12. which is a Psalm of *Moses*, *So teach us to number our daies, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* Teach us so to number them as we may know our own frailty; so as we may have the impressions upon our hearts that we

are

are but Grass, and as the Flower in the Field that withers in a moment; and *David* puts up the like Petition, in *Psal.* 39. 4. *Lord make me to know my end, and the measure of my daies, what it is, that I may know how frail I am:* Teach me to know my end, *that I may know how frail I am:* He doth not desire to know how many daies he shall live, or when his end shall be, but to know how frail a creature he was, that it may take impression on his heart. And truly these teachings are such as none but God can teach; to teach a man to know how frail he is, and every day to look upon himself as a Spire of Grass, or as a Flower in the Field; that is in a withering and decaying condition every moment. The Apostle *Paul* also tells what his practice was, in 1 *Cor.* 15. 31. *I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.* He died in affection to the World: I sit loose to the World, I die to it in affection, but I also die daily, I put my self into a dying condition, I know that I walk in the midst of Jeopardies, and therefore I sit loose from all, yea from life it self, I protest I die daily. The Prophet speaks of some that put the evil day far from them, it is a sign that the day of Death is an evil day when men put it far from them; it is a good day to the soul that hath interest in Christ, it is the best day that ever came to him, *Eccles.* 7. 1. you shall see what the wise man says there, *A good name is better than a precious Oyntment: and the day of death than the day of ones birth:* It is not so to every one, but to the righteous it is, to him that hath a good name, a name that is better than precious oyntment; to him that hath the new name better than that of sons and daughters, to him the day of death is better than the day of his birth; therefore saith the Apostle, *For to me to die*

is gain; and therefore it is good for Christians to look upon death at a distance, for death in it self is an enemy: *The last enemy that shall be destroyed*, saies the Apostle, *is Death*; it is an enemy, such an enemy as hath a terrible visage; and therefore let's look death in the face often, that so we may be acquainted with the visage of death, that the terror of this enemy may be taken away: it is an enemy, and such an enemy as is armed, such an enemy as hath a sting with him, *The sting of death is sin*; and therefore it is a great deal of wisdom to combate with this enemy at a distance, to disarm him, to take away the sting before he comes upon you, that you may be the better able to grapple with him when he draws nigh; it is good therefore for men to consider whether they be able to grapple with and meet this enemy or no, whether they be able to look him in the face, to put themselves in a posture of combating, and how you may meet with him without fear, how you may overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, to exercise faith and to eye the conquest that Christ hath gotten over death, to see how he hath taken away the sting and horror, and to sanctifie the Grave, this is a great mercy.

1. First, And therefore let me speak to you one word, you whose life is thus to die, do it daily with the Apostle: it is exceeding beneficial to the Saints this kind of exercise; the Lord himself doth commend it as a point of high wisdom by *Moses*, O how doth he wish his people, that all his people were thus wise, in *Deut.* 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end:* it is a point of high wisdom for men to consider their latter end, and through grace it proves a great help, even unto the people of God, it proves a spur to them; I say it is a spur to the works and services

of

of their Generation, when they consider their latter end: *I must work the work of him that sent me*, saies Christ, *the night comes when no man can work*; and so again saies *Solomon*, *Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with all thy might*; *for there is no work, nor device, nor counsel, nor knowledge in the Grave whither thou art going*: If therefore it lieth before thee, neglect not the work of thy Generation; if he say, This is the way, walk in it; if he say, By this or by that thou shalt be for my Glory in the World, take heed you neglect it not, no, not a minute, for how soon maist thou go to thy home, thy long-home! and there is no work in the Grave; this, through grace I say, proves a spur to God's people, the consideration of their latter end; I have but a little time in which I can gain glory to God's name, O take it, O soul improve it for God's glory; this I say puts a man to consider his latter end.

2. Secondly, Again, It is that which will make the soul truly *Magnanimous*, truly valiant for God, it will beget a mighty Heroick spirit, this conversing with death at a distance, this considering of a mans latter end; see what God saies in that pathetical wish I before spake of in *Deut.* 32. 29, 30. If they did but consider their latter end, how should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight: the consideration of this would make a man Magnanimous for God, it would make a man to carry his life in his hand, and venture it freely if God should call him forth: such a righteous man hath conversed with death at a distance, and hath seen and knows that it will be gain; he fears not a thousand, he is truly Magnanimous, he only looks at the cause, and goes forth willingly; for though there be a thousand to one, he fears not, for he hath considered his latter end.

Whereas on the contrary, the neglect of this, the neglect of conversing with death daily, makes men liable to the snares and temptations of the world; I say, the neglect of this doth expose men to a thousand snares in the world: how doth this world keep many from seeking after the life of Christ? House, Land, Friends, Riches, Honours and Pleasure, what snares are these to thousands? What's the cause of this? It is because men do not consider their latter end, it is because that men have a kind of phancy, or dream that they shall always possess these things below: men dream of an Eternity here, and they are not indeed perswaded of parting, that they are a parting from them, and so prove woeful snares; they are neglecting the great things of God, and the great things of Eternity, because they do not look upon all as Grass, as withering Grass, themselves also as fading Flowers, therefore they are exposed to these temptations; yea, therefore it is that many a poor creature is brought down wonderfully, because they do not converse with death at a distance, they do not consider their latter end; in Lam. 1. 9. *She remembered not her latter end, therefore she came down wonderfully*; because men do not converse with death at a distance, they do not consider their latter end: the rich Fool in the Gospel remembered not his latter end, & therefore he came down wonderfully; men are brought down wonderfully, suddenly they are cut off e're they are aware of it, and all because they do not converse with death at a distance; and therefore when it comes, it is wonderful strange to them, because they do not die daily, they do not consider their latter end.

Object. But you will say, there are many that converse with death, and look death in the face every day, and yet we see they are not the better for it: as many that

carry

carry their lives in their hands when they go upon the Sea, and see the wonders of God in the deeps; and when they go into the high places in the Field, to engage and venture their lives, such men look death in the face, yet we see not that they are the better for it.

Answ. I Answer, It is true, there is a conversing with death, which makes not men the better but the worse: for there are many men, as *Solomon* saies, *It is better to go into the house of mourning than into the house of feasting, for in the house of mourning the living they will lay it to heart*; but it is possible for men to go so long in the house of mourning, to be hardened so as they cannot lay death to heart, that they look upon it as a matter of custom to die, and to be buried, and there is an end: it is possible for such, the Prophet speaks of, who have made a league with Hell and Death; but *Paul's* conversing with death at a distance, was of another stamp, for his conversing with death was from an impression that God had made upon his spirit of the frailty of the creature, it was the Lord that taught him for to number his daies: till God teach this lesson, no man can converse with death daily from an inward real apprehension of the vanity of the creature, with the perishing condition of this Tabernacle of Clay, this was *Paul's* conversing. The wicked man converseth with death, when he is bold to die (as it is possible he may) his familiarity with death, it ariseth it may be from some ignorance or hardness, he takes his leap, as a blind man may do, when he skips down a Hill; he knows not how far it is to the bottom; through ignorance men know not what death is, know not what the condition is that death leads to, they do not consider of the consequence of it, and of that Eternity that

follows death, and therefore it is ignorance of this that makes the wicked man desperate: but when the righteous man is bold as a Lion, and death is familiar to him, it is from a principle of knowledge, and not from ignorance; he knows what death is, he knows that in it self it is an enemy, it is an enemy to nature, and it is destructive to all outward comforts, but he knows also that death hath lost his sting, he knows it is conquered, it is an enemy, but it is a conquered enemy, he knows that Christ was the death of it: *O Death, I will be thy death,* it is Christ that hath fulfilled and made good that challenge, he knows there is an Eternity beyond the Grave, and can look upon it as gainful, he knows it is gain that is laid up in Heaven, and it is death that makes him so gainful, and it is this that makes him so bold as a Lion. This leads me more particularly to consider the Proposition as it is in it self.

To die is gain. It is a strange Paradox, that none can reveal but Christ, and such as have Christ for their life, that death should be gain to: that that should be gain that seems to be the greatest loss, that strips a man naked of all his comforts, that doth at once take away the desire of the eye, and the delight of the heart, this is that which a natural man cannot understand, or he cannot believe it at least: but it is made good unto all the Saints, and therefore I shall lay down this as the Position which I shall insist upon.

That where Christ is Life, there Death is gain. You see there is a connexion betwixt this and the former part of the Text: and therefore *Solomon* saies (as I told you before) *That the day of Death to the righteous, is better than the day of ones birth*; and saies the Apostle, *We groan to be cloathed upon with*

with our house which is from Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. There is a groaning in all the Saints to be cloathed upon with that House which is from Heaven, that so mortality may be swallowed up in life. Now death is gain to every Believer, whether by *Death* you understand lesser Death, afflictions, losses, crosses, bonds and imprisonments, persecution; bonds for the Gospel as the Apostle was in; here I say, if you understand by *Death* these lesser deaths, it is true, that all these deaths are gain, the Lord makes his people gainers by all their losses; they gain by every condition that they are brought into, though the outward man lose, the inward man gains. The Prophet *Habkakuk*, if you look upon him in his great distress, you shall see what a gainer he was by it: he was in sore affliction, he saies, his very belly trembled, his very bowels trembled within him, but he was a gainer by this, he gains in faith, his faith broke out gloriously, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18: he gained faith, and faith is precious, *The tryal of your faith is more precious than that of Gold*; so did *David*, he was in great distress, in *Psal.* 46. 2. but he was a gainer by it, he gained in faith and confidence, *Though the earth be removed*, saies he, *and though the Mountains be thrown into the Sea, though the Waves thereof roar*, yet there he professes that *he will hold fast his confidence in God.* If you look upon *Job*, you shall see what a gainer he was by all his losses, and those sore afflictions and trials that he met withal, he gained abundance of experience of God, experience of his wisdom, experience of his power, and experience of his faithfulness, experience of his goodness and kindness: he gained the knowledge of God, and he gained the knowledge of himself, that when he came out of his affliction, he throws himself at the foot-stool

of

of God, in *Job* 42. 6. *Now*, saies he, *I abhor my self in dust and ashes.* The Apostle *Paul* was a man of great affliction, there were bonds that did attend him in every place almost where he came, yet he was a gainer by all; he gained in confidence, in holy boldness, *The Lord hath delivered, and he doth deliver, and he will deliver*; he gained abundance of submission to the Will of God, by contemplation on his condition, and by this he knew how to want as well as how to abound, and he could do all things through Christ that strengthened him, and it was his obedience to the Will of Christ which strengthened him; and I believe there is none of Gods people that will bring in their experiences, if they will truly and impartially cast up their accounts, but they will and shall find that God hath made them gainers by their losses, and by their several afflictions that God hath laid upon them, they have gained at least this, to know that they are nothing, they see themselves what fruitless unprofitable creatures they are, and they have known what the creature is when God is at a distance, they have seen something of themselves, and something of God, and if there be no more than this, this is a great deal of gain; and that it is true of all these *Deaths*, the Lord makes his people gainers by them, and he leads them through these conditions, because he intends to make them gainers by them; every affliction that he sends, is a servant of Christ, every afflicted condition is a servant of Christ, and is sent with a good message, is sent to communicate some good thing to the soul of every Believer: God stands up and saies, as in another case, *Who will go and perswade Ahab?* And the *Spirit* answers, *I*; God saies, Who will go and carry

carry tidings of love from Heaven to such a soul, something of himself, something of the Divine nature? God hath store of Messengers; That will I, saies one mercy: and that will I, saies another; afflictions are all ready to communicate some good thing to those that love the Lord Christ; and indeed they are narrow Pipes, all these conditions that the Saints are brought into, they are narrow Pipes, they can convey but a little, a very little of God by them; now God is an infinite fountain, and he can convey much of himself, one condition is too little, too narrow for God to work in, too narrow a Pipe for God to pour in all that good which he intends for his servants, therefore he chooseth variety of works, great mercies and variety of afflictions, they are all the servants of God, and they have commission to go and work for such a man, to work for such a mans good, the promise is given to the Believer, That *all shall work together for good*, so that all are his servants, all deaths, afflictions, persecutions, whatsoever distresses his people shall meet withal, shall work together for good, they must needs gain: a man that hath a multitude of servants that work for him, it's all for their good as well as his; why, Believers have a multitude of servants, *all is yours*; all, Christ is yours, every condition that God hath brought you into, shall work for your good, for they are Christs servants, and you must needs be gainers; and truly, God knows that their gain is his gain, he will gain by their gain, and therefore will make their deaths to be gain to them, for it comes back again to his Treasury, he knows that his people will not purse his glory, will not put up that which is Gods: if God doth come in and make them gainers by their afflictions; if God doth in-

large

large their hearts, and set them free, they won't say, By my own hand have I made my self rich, by my own industry I have gotten this wealth, this strength, this peace, this liberty; for what are we, that we should be able to walk answerably to any measure that God gives out unto us? But,

Again, God will make *Death* it self gain unto us, not only lesser deaths but the *greater death*, it shall be gain, even that separation of soul from body, which to the wicked man is the worst of deaths, Christ becomes gain to that soul whose life Christ is. I will tell you in one particular (and leave the rest wherein death is gain to that soul, whose life Christ is, and that is this:

He shall gain *Rest*: *Blessed are those that die in the Lord*, in *Rev.* 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them*: that's their nature: he speaks in a time of persecution, when the Beast came out of the bottomless pit, to make war against the Saints, the Lord gives encouragement from hence, they are blessed though Anti-Christ curse them as Heretick's, but from henceforth they are blessed that die in the Lord, especially that die in the Lord as these did: but wherein are they blessed? In this, *That they rest from their labours*, there's a part of their blessedness: see what the Prophet *Isaiah* saies of the righteous man; he speaks of this blessedness, they shall gain rest, in *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their Beds, each one walking in his uprightness*; they shall rest as a man rests in his bed, so shall the righteous man rest in his Grave: the Grave shall be as a bed to them, upon which, they that die in the Lord, shall rest sweetly from these their labours; this World is a troublesome World, a very tur-

turmoiling World, full of troubles and labours both to flesh and spirit, and they that die in the Lord rest from their labours. This World is a place to work in, *When the Sun arises, man goes forth to his labour till the evening comes.* But you will say,

This is no great matter, what gain is here? The gain of *Rest*; rest to the flesh, is this any great gain? *Job* saies, in *Job* 3. 13. *For now should I have lien still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest.* Wicked men rest in their Graves, they that could never rest well but in wickedness, they rest in their Graves; but what then, where is the gain that the righteous man rests in? For they both rest in their Graves.

1. First, There is a difference in their rest, the wicked mans rest is partial, it is but the rest of the body, the flesh only, it is not the rest of the spirit. It is an imperfect rest, they do not lie down to rest sweetly on their beds with those peaceful thoughts that the righteous man hath in his going to bed, to the Grave, O their rest is a troublesome rest; It is said in *Psal.* 16. there in the person of Christ, *My flesh rests in hope, and shall not see corruption*; his very flesh should rest in hope, the very flesh of the righteous man, when it is in the Grave rests in hope; his very bones when dry and scattered, still they rest in hope, hope of a Resurrection: But now we may say on the contrary, that the very flesh of the wicked man rests in fear, his very flesh rests in fear, he fears the Resurrection, that which is the righteous mans hope, is the wicked mans fear, he fears to see the morning; he was loth to go to bed, but will be more loth to rise, for his flesh rests in fear; he rather saies, Lord let me lie here alway, let me never go out of this Dungeon, better lying here alway than going to Execution,

2. But

2. But again, Besides, the rest of the righteous man is not only the rest of the flesh, but the rest of the *Spirit*; he ceases from all the assaults of Satan, from his own crooked nature, burdens of sin and corruption, whilst he was in the Land of the living, and those out-cries, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death*; the burden of death and sin is taken away, it shall be put under his feet for ever; he shall not see any more any of the motions of sin, any of those lusts and corruptions that formerly did war in any of his members, he shall no more cry, O Lord deliver me from a hard heart, a corrupt spirit, a passionate heart; O, saies he, my life is a burden to me, to see these daughters of *Heth*, these *Canaanites*, because of these corruptions of mine, my life is a burden to me. Well, there shall be no such complaints beyond the Grave, and therefore, saies he, death shall make the Saints gainers.

But again, They shall gain freedom from all the *temptations of Satan*; this is great gain, if well considered, they shall no more be assaulted, no more fiery darts thrown at them: Here they are battered with temptations, that through temptations their lives many times become a burden to them; Ay, but death shall set them free out of Gun-shot; here they are tossed up and down, turmoiled by Satan, as Christ was carryed up to the Mountain, and then to the Pinacle, tossed up and down from Mountain to Pinacle; Ay, but then there shall be no tempter, no temptation shall enter any place of that *Jerusalem* that is above in Heaven, and therefore to the godly man death is gain.

Besides, They shall gain *freedom from all the oppositions and oppressions of the World*; I say freedom, they shall rest from the oppressions of men; and *Job*

did account that, and look upon that as a great mercy; he did envy men in their Graves, saies he, *They are at rest: the poor man is freed from the Oppressor*, from all persecutions of men, and from all the slaveries and bondages, and tyrannizing of them; why, death shall set them free from the oppressions of men, from all evil of men, from all wars, and rumours of wars, and sad effects of wars, death sets them free from these. O, say you, I have lost a friend, but you know not what he gained, he is taken from the evil to come in the Generations after him; he shall rest from all sorrows, from all afflictions, from all passions: the Lord God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, there shall be no mourning beyond the Grave, no complaining in the streets of the new *Jerusalem*.

Brethren, Lay all these together, and see if this be not gain to those in whom the life of Christ is: to gain nothing but this; *Rest* from their labours, and rest from oppression and tyranny, to rest from sorrows, passions, tears and mournings, this is a mercy; but to rest from temptations, to rest from sin, and from all those lusts and corruptions that did war in their members and in their minds, this is a great mercy, if there were no more; see how you are beholding to Christ for these, if you find no more gain that death brings you in that are in Christ, how are you beholding unto Christ for it? Death is not gain in it self, but you are beholding to Christ that hath made it so. It is said of *Noah* in *Gen.* 5. 29. when *Noah* was born, it is said, this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands; *This man shall comfort us, for he shall be a Preacher of righteousness*, he was a Type of Christ, and a Preacher of righteousness through faith, and therefore *Noah* did comfort them through Preaching of Christ the righteousness of Faith, an ob-

ject

ject of rest, a place to take up in, in the midst of their toil and labour; they were beholding to Christ, of whom *Noah* was a Type, who is this rest: and to you death would not be thus gain, if Christ had not made it so; no, this man, this Lord Jesus hath brought in comfort concerning that estate of separation of soul from body; it is not gain in it self, but Christ hath made it so unto his people. O how are you engaged unto Christ! say even for this, if you should hear no more of this rest, I will bless his great name for it.

SER-

SERMON VI.

PHILIP. 1. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

THE Apostle, I told you the last day, doth converse with Death at a distance. But I entered into the main Point, which I shall prosecute at this time.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.

DOCT.

Where Christ is life, there death is gain.

See the Connexion, *For to me to live is Christ*; Christ is my life, and death is my gain: Death is gain to that soul that hath Christ for its life. One particular I named, I shall prosecute the rest.

1. First, Their gain is a gain of rest; I say, every Believer by death gains *Rest*, a rest from toil and troubles of an evil turmoiling World; *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labour*, they rest the rest of the righteous man: When he is in the Grave, it is another kind of rest than the rest of the

wicked; it is said of *David* who is a Type of Christ, that *his flesh rests in hope:* the flesh of the righteous man rests in hope, but the flesh of the wicked man may be said to rest in fear, he may fear the approaching day of light, he may fear to lie down, but more to rise up; he cries out, O Lord, let me lie here to Eternity, for the chains of darkness are better than the light of a new day; but the flesh of the righteous man shall rest in hope, he shall have no more fiery darts of the Devil thrown at him, he rests from temptation and oppression of the World, and from the tyranny of man, he rests from all griefs, sorrows, tears and complaints, where all tears shall be wiped away, and no complaints in the streets at that day: here is a great deal of gain, the righteous man gains rest in the day of death.

2. Secondly, As he gains rest, so he gains *perfect peace, and fulness of joy*; it is said in *Isa.* 57. 1. *The righteous are taken away from the evil to come*, &c. and it is said, he shall enter into peace, *They shall rest in their beds, every one walking in his uprightness*; they shall not only rest in their bed, in the Grave, but they shall *enter into peace*, and they shall enter into joy, in *Matth.* 25. 21. *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:* he enters into peace, he enters into joy, that he shall thenceforth dwell in it; he shall dwell in joy, he takes full possession of it, it is no more shut out: peace doth enter into the righteous mans heart whilst he is on earth, but till death comes, his peace here shall be interrupted, he shall enter into it, and it into him; what *Job* saies of the body, so of the joy of the righteous man, it continues not at a stay, his peace and joy is many times interrupted, but in Heaven he shall meet with no more Clouds, there shall be a morning that shall drive away all Clouds, he shall enter into joy, and he shall dwell in the fulness of it;

Christ

Christ hath purchased it, and he hath given out the first fruits of this peace and joy, but the full possession is no till death, and therefore it is said in *Psal.* 97. 11. *That light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart:* he reaps something here, but it is but a little in respect of the harvest that he shall reap afterward, it rather seems to be a sowing time than a reaping here; but afterward he shall reap the fulness of it; peace is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart: so that here is another benefit of gain to a Believer by death, he shall then drink to satisfaction of those Rivers of joy and pleasures for evermore that do run at the right-hand of God.

3. But again, Thirdly, As he gains joy and peace, so by death the believing soul *gains enlargement and liberty*; this is a great part of his gain: the soul by death is set at liberty; for the spirit even of a righteous man, though it be the Candle of the Lord, and though it be enlightened from Heaven, yet whilst it is in this body, which is now corrupted, it is like a light that is in a dark Lanthorn, the light of those excellent faculties of the soul are eclipsed and darkened; I say, so it is with all mankind, the curse came by the fall of *Adam*, that the body is as a dark Lanthorn to the soul, and it doth hide that light which should otherwise be revealed; as the soul acts most highly when it hath least of the body, as when the body is asleep, it sees not, it hears not, it reads not, yet the soul then sees, and mourns, and joyes more exquisitely than it doth or can do in the body; and therefore when the soul is nigh parting with the body, it acts most highly, and so it shall do in its separation, when separated from his body, it shall be freed from his dark Lanthorn, it shall be taken out from his Dungeon, as it were, and all the faculties of the soul shall be enlarged, the understanding, the appre-

bension, the capacity of the soul shall be mightily enlarged. The Prophet speaks of a time a coming, that there shall be no more an Infant of daies, the beginnings of it shall be on earth but the perfection of it shall be in Heaven, *There shall be no more an infant of daies, there shall be no more a child of understanding, but he that is weak shall be as David, and he that is as David, shall be as the Angel of the Lord*; the capacity of the soul shall be wonderfully enlarged, as it shall comprehend most of God; here it is straitened, and it could not receive much of God, it could not receive much of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, it is not large enough to take in much of the notion of those glorious things, but when death comes, it shall be enlarged: *And then*, saies the Apostle, *I shall know, even as I am known.* It shall be exceedingly enlarged to take in very much of God. And as the understanding shall be set at liberty, so all the faculties of the soul shall be set at liberty. They shall be greatly enlarged towards God, and run towards God, the desires of the soul shall run like a mighty stream towards God; here there was but a little drop of the affection, but then a mighty stream shall run; not only faith but love shall be perfect.

A believing soul shall be enlarged in respect of action; as the faculties, so all the actings of the Soul, shall be set at large, at liberty: here the soul can't act according to its desires, it would do more for God, but there's a clogg that lies upon it, it hath mighty wings, wings like the Ostridge, but there is such a heavy body, as it can't get up: there's wings would carry the soul up to Heaven every moment, but there is a heavy body; in *Rom.* 7. 19, 20, 24. *For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I*

that

that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I say there is infiniteness in a believers desires to do for God, and he would enjoy more and more still, and he would do more and more for God, ay, but he is straitened up in his actings, there he is narrow, he cannot act according to his desire: but now when death comes, the believing soul shall be set at liberty, it shall be able to act according to its desire, it shall be whatever it desires to be, and it shall do whatever it desires to do, and it shall have as much holiness as it will desire to have; this is a mighty priviledge, and a great deal of that gain that comes in by death unto that soul where Christ is its life; it meets with this liberty and enlargement. But again,

4. Fourthly, The believing soul by death gains not only liberty but *abundance of life:* it gains life, it hath more of the life of Christ, it enjoyes more of the life of Christ, and hath the fulness of it communicated; and now Brethren, this is a mighty gain to gain life: what would a man gain more, and what is a greater gain than life? It is beyond the gain of all treasure whatever, Natural life is the greatest of all mercies; *Thou shalt have thy life for a prey*, and that's the greatest mercy, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life:* and in this the believing soul shall come nearer to the life of Christ, for he shall have the life of Christ, who is the fountain, and so more of it communicated to him; and therefore it was that, for which the Apostle desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is best of all, for there he should have perfection of life in Christ, there shall be nothing there to hinder the life of Christ from flowing in unto the soul, there shall be no cloggs, no rubs in the way, but there shall be a full enjoyment, and a full

manifestation of that life of Christ, which is the life of the soul, is made over to the soul for its life even to Eternity; this is another part of the great gain that comes in by death to believing souls. But again,

5. Fifthly, As it gains life, so it gains *victory by death*; the believing soul gains Victory, full, compleat victory and conquest over all its enemies: He doth not only rest, as I said before; it is a great gain to rest, rest from the motion of sin, and lust, and rest from the motion of temptation, but that's not all; it rests and sits down as a Conquerour, the Palm of victory is then put into the hand of every Believer, and he shall stand upon that Mount *Zion*, and shall sing *Hallelujah* unto the Lord, he is then made a Conquerour there, for all enemies at that day are put under; all the lusts of his heart, and all Principalities and Powers, and whatsoever was a vexation and disquietment, shall be put under his feet, and he shall sit down with Christ as a Conquerour, *I have fought the good fight*, saith the Apostle in 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. *I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith, and now is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness:* my life-time, it was my time of combating, but now I am ready to be dissolved, to be offered up, I shall sit down as a Conquerour, and I shall have a Crown of righteousness; that's another priviledge, another part of the gain that comes in to the believing soul by death. But,

6. Sixthly, *It gains a full sight of God:* I say, the believing soul by death gains a full sight of God, a full vision of God; this gain is glorious and unspeakable: it's that which the Saints do press after to see the face of God; it was *Moses*'s great request, *I beseech thee shew me thy face*; mighty desirous to see the face of God: and indeed it is a compleating of their hap-

happineſs that they ſhall ſee the face of God; *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God,* in *Matth.* 5. 8. here is the bleſſedneſs of that people whoſe heart is purged by faith, they ſhall ſee God; they ſhall ſee him here, ay, but in Heaven they ſhall ſee him face to face, in 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *We now ſee him through a glaſs darkly, but we ſhall ſee him face to face, and then ſhall we know him as we are known:* It is true, God cannot be ſeen with the eye of the body, neither here nor in Heaven, ſo the Saints cannot ſee him, for he is an infinite Being, a Spirit inviſible, inviſible to the eye of the body, but he ſhall be held forth clearly, God will hold himſelf forth to the eye of their underſtanding, and his people ſhall have full and clear viſions of him: they ſhall know him in his Nature, and they ſhall know him in his attributes, they ſhall know him in all his works, and they ſhall know him in his Word; whatſoever was hid from them in the daies of their fleſh, ſhall then be revealed, they ſhall know him in his Counſel, in thoſe ſecret waies which God walked in from Eternity, which no creature can give a reaſon of, God will then unfold himſelf, they ſhall have continual viſions of God, viſions of grace, and viſions of love, and viſions of light, and viſions of glory, which ſhall continually flow forth from the Throne, this will be a mighty gain. When the Queen of *Sheba* came to *Solomon* to ſee his Houſe, in 2 *Chron.* 9. 7. ſhe ſaid, *Happy are thy ſervants that ſtand in thy preſence, to hear thy wiſdom*; if they were happy that ſaw *Solomon* and his wiſdom, and look'd him in the face, then much more ſhall they that ſtand for ever in the preſence of the great God, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and ſhall ſee his face and behold his wiſdom, and ſhall for evermore be ſatisfied with a full viſion of God, ſo much as the creature can hold.

It's true, the creature is finite, it shall not be infinite as God himself is, but they shall behold the glorious visions of God himself, which will be mighty gain. But again,

7. Seventhly, Believing souls by death shall be gainers in respect of their habitation; here they dwell *in a house of Clay*, so *Job* calls it, *Job* 4. 19. it is a *house of Clay, whose foundation is in the dust, and is crush'd before the Moth.* It is a poor house that a Moth can throw down, that the Moth can crush, and yet this is the house, the house of the body, and this is the house that the soul lives in whilst it is here; a house of Clay that hath no foundation but the dust: a house without a foundation, it cannot stand, it's down in an instant, every storm of wind will blow it down, it hath only its foundation of, and from the dust; exceeding frail is the body set forth by this expression: now what shall the soul gain when death comes, *It hath a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, in 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the Heavens:* It's a mansion, or dwelling house, it's not a Tabernacle; *In my Fathers house are many mansions, Joh.* 14. 2. It's not made by the hand of man, it's made by God himself: It's glory that was laid up before the foundation of the world; it's uncreated glory, God himself will be the heaven, he'll be the dwelling place of his people, and they shall dwell in him, throughout all Generations for ever and for ever: here is a change you see, in respect of the habitation, and it will be much more gain, than for man to change a Dungeon for a Palace, the soul comes out of a Dungeon, and it's put into an Inheritance, an Inheritance with the Saints in light. But again,

8. Eighth-

8. Eighthly, They gain in *respect of their company:* our Saviour saies in *Matth.* 8. 11. *They shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God*; no worse company than *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob,* and the spirits of just men made perfect: there shall be no failings, nor defects, there shall be no want of love, there shall be no blemish to take off love, but they shall enjoy the company of the spirits of just men made perfect, this will be a mighty gain. Here there are many failings, failings in the best of Saints, the best company that believers have, even Saints, there are failings in the best of them; but there shall be nothing seen there, but the Image of God, nothing but the Image of Christ; when they look upon one another, they shall see nothing but an attractive love, there shall be no emulation there, they shall not envy one anothers glory, but every one shall glory in his own happiness as his own gain: they shall gain in respect of company. Again in the

9. Ninth place, They shall gain *Confirmation and Establishment* by this blessed condition, all this that is spoken of, he shall be established in it for ever: there shall be no more returning to sin and sorrow, no more returns of former temptations, there shall be no more possibility to fall again, but it shall be confirmed and established in blessedness, it shall no more lose his happiness than Christ can lose his, no more turned out of heaven than the Son of God can be turned out, they shall be confirmed and established for ever, there shall be no robbers, nor no fear of danger; this is another part of their gain.

10. Tenthly, To name no more, Believers shall be gainers *in respect of their body*; for their *bodies shall be new moulded at the Resurrection of the great day,* the body shall be made new and serviceable to the soul,

every

every way fitted and Organized for the soul to work: *This corruptible shall put on incorruption*, saies the Apostle, and *mortality shall be swallowed up in life*; God will make up these vessels of the bodies of his people again at the Resurrection, and when he hath raised them up, he will raise them as vessels of honour, and vessels of glory. And as it is said, that that matter whereof is made the purest *China*, is buried many Generations in the earth before they take it, and of that they make the purest *China*; so though you be buried in the earth, the Lord will raise you up, though many Generations after, and they shall be raised up, and fitted for the spirits of just men made perfect, that God may be glorified both in soul and body to Eternity. This is the gain of that soul by death, to that body whose life Christ is: And there must needs be gain to those that are Christs. For,

1. First of all, It were not possible that Believers should be willing to part, and leave all comforts behind them, and that they should so part with all willingly, with that which is so desirable in the world, I say, it could not be, if there were not gain behind: for Gods people have nature as well as others, and they have natural affections, and nature seeks its own preservation, and it looks upon death as an enemy, and yet that this enemy shall be entertained so willingly, that when the Lord calls, he should open his bosom to receive the stroke that he shall send, and be a volunteer in his death; certainly there is something in this, there is that which the World knows not of: how willingly did Christ send forth his spirit? It's said, *He cryed with a loud voice, and gave up the Ghost*, his spirit was not snatcht away violently, but he gave it up willingly; it is not so with the wicked man, and it was not so with the rich fool in the Gospel, *This night shall thy soul be*

be required at thy hand; his soul was commanded, it was taken from him by force and violence, whether he will or no, he was not a volunteer, but his soul was pluckt from him; but that a man shall give his life up voluntarily, that he should entertain death voluntarily, and part with all Friends, Wife and Parents; why, surely it is because the Lord gives a greater assurance of gain, which is to be found beyond death it self. But again,

2. Secondly, If there were not such gain by death to the godly man, it were not possible that he should make such a venture as he doth. If a man venture into a far Country, he will not venture for a little, he will venture for gain, and good gain, or else he will not venture: there is a venture at death with the godly man, he makes a venture, and it is the greatest venture that ever was made, he doth not venture his estate, but he ventures his soul which is infinitely of more worth than his estate, and the venture is for Eternity, and if that venture be lost, all is lost, and he is undone for ever, yet thus he ventures and lancheth forth into the Gulph of Eternity: but he hath a word from the Lord, and he saith, Well, if God will deceive me, let him, I will venture; now the believing soul doth see the future great gain that will follow death. But again,

3. Thirdly, If it were not so, Believers were the miserablest creatures of all men; *If it were not for Christ, we were of all men most miserable*, if there were no hopes of better, then we were the miserablest of all men, for we are the lowest of all men: Afflictions, Persecutions, Griefs and Sorrows of all sorts is the portion, many times, of Gods dearest people and children; now if there were nothing beyond the Grave, *we were of all men most miserable*; the Apostle was in deaths often, he was dead every way,

way, he carried his life in his hand, he was the off-scouring of the world, so accounted, and now if there were in this life no hope, no hope of a Resurrection, no hopes of a better world, then we were miserable indeed; but the believing soul knows that the end of the righteous man is peace, and the end of the transgressour is, to be cut off. But again,

4. Fourthly and lastly, to name no more, Death must needs be gain to believing souls, because it was gain to Christ: Christs gain came in by death, and therefore so shall theirs: *Ought not the Son of man to suffer these things, and so to enter into his glory?* It's the way to his glory, by way of sufferings. He was led along all his life in this way, his gain came in by losses, his honour, his greatest honour came in by dishonour, and that reproach and that low condition that befell him whilst he was in the World, he found honour in dishonour, and his exaltation came in in a way of humiliation, and life came in for all his people in a way of death, by his own death, *He took upon himself the form of a servant*, &c. his exaltation came in in a way of humiliation, and life for his people came in by his death; as it was with Christ, so shall it be with his members; for there shall be a conformity, and there shall be an uniformity betwixt Christ and them; as it was in the head, so shall it be with the members; as his exaltation came in in a way of humiliation, so shall theirs, and their life in the greatest of it shall come in by death; God the Father delights to walk in this way, for it is contrary to the World, and God delights alway to do the greatest things by contraries. In the Creation of the World, and so in the new Creation, when he made the World he made all things of nothing: and so of the new Creation, he converts a sinner by that which is most op-

oppoſite, by the Word of the Lord, which his ſoul hates, and yet that Word of the Lord doth conquer him, and change him into his own likeneſs: and ſo God leads his people to glory through a low way of ſuffering, and when he brings them to the full poſſeſſion of it, he carries them through the dark entry, through the dark narrow ſtrait entry of death, and through that place he leads them to the enjoyment of that glory which comes in by death. I have no time for Application: But Brethren conſider it, death is gain to thoſe whoſe life Chriſt is, but it is loſs, and the greateſt loſs that ever was met with, unto thoſe that have not Chriſt for their life; I beſeech you to look to your ſelves, and to look about you before death comes: when death comes you muſt venture ſuch a venture as never was made, you venture your ſouls and your Eternity, and by that venture you are made or elſe you are marr'd to Eternity; look about you, examine, Is death like to prove gain to you or no? What aſſurance have you that death ſhall be gain? I ſhould preſs this further, but the time is paſt already, I ſhall reſerve it for another time.

S R-

SERMON VII.

PHILIP. I. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

YOU may remember the Point that we are insisting upon.

DOCT.

That where Christ is life, there death is gain.

I have opened the Point, and shewed you wherein death is gain to believers in several particulars. But I shall proceed in answering some Objections before I come to the Use.

Object. It may be, may some carnal heart say with *Nicodemus*, how can these things be? how is it possible that death should be gain, when it strips a man of all his comforts, turns him out of possession of House and Land, it is no longer his, if death comes it deprives him of all his friends, he is left friendless, it turns him naked out of the World, and how is it possible that that should be gain?

Answ.

Answ. I Answer, If there be not something beyond the Grave, if a man hath not an Inheritance laid up in Heaven, I grant it, that death is the greatest loss of all, for it robs a man of all comforts at once; therefore I say, if a man hath not a share in the Land of Promise, if he hath not a more endurable substance in Heaven, I grant that death is a great loss; therefore what I say concerning those who are gainers by death, it concerns them only that have interest in Christ, and to them it is not loss to be stript of all comforts; for why? It puts them into possession of their Inheritance; and what though death doth strip them of a few outward comforts? It's no great loss, or it's not considerable. If a great Heir be gone home to his own Country, if he gets to his own door, his own house, and his purse be taken from him, what are a few pence? It's no great wrong, because he hath now taken possession of an Inheritance that will bring him in a yearly Revenue, thousands it may be; the loss of his few pence from his purse is no great matter.

2. Secondly, Besides, Whatsoever is lost in death, it is no great matter to a gracious heart, because the World is Crucified to him, and he to the World before-hand; I say, however the World may look upon death as a loss, yet a gracious heart doth not, because the World is dead to him before-hand, and if it be dead, if it be a dead Carkass, it is no great loss to part with it; and though a man loves his Friend never so dearly, as *Sarah*, she was the beloved of *Abraham*, *Abraham*'s beloved wife, and yet when death came, *Give me a burying place*, saies he, *that I may bury my dead out of my sight*, it was no matter to be parted with, when she was dead; and so saies a gracious heart of all the things of the World, they are dead,

dead, *The world is crucified to me*, saies the Apostle, *and I to the World*, and therefore no great loss to him to part with them, because they are dead to him.

3. Thirdly, Besides, A believing soul shall find all to be made up in God abundantly; whatsoever seems to be a loss shall be made up in Heaven, with the presence of God and Christ: Is there a loss of house and Land? The Lord will be the dwelling place of his people throughout all Generations; dost thou lose the light of the Sun? the Lamb is the light of that City: thou shalt find all relations in God, Husband, Wife, Brother, Sister, whatever relation is broken by death, it shall be made up in God, he shall be their friend instead of all, and you shall find the comfort of all relations made up in Heaven; in *Gen.* 17. 7. *I will be a God to thee:* it comprehends all relations, that is, Friends, Father, Husband, Wife, House, Land, all creature comforts whatsoever: *I will be a God to thee*, they are to be found in God. Therefore whatsoever, I say, seems to be lost by death, shall be made up in the enjoyment of God himself, and of his Son Jesus Christ: so much in answer to that. But,

Object. 2. Some poor hearts that are taken with this truth, and with the great gain of Heaven, will cry out, O Lord, why do I live in this miserable world? and why is light given to him that is in misery? and why is life given to the bitter in Spirit? *Job* 3. 20. I have heard of the gain of death, and I cannot be content any longer in this vale of misery, to be kept from my gain, I know not how to bear it any longer: O that the Lord would make haste, and let loose his hand upon me, and cut off this thread of my life.

Answ. Now good Christian, let me say a little to thee; do not make too much haste, do not make more haste than thy Father would have thee. I remember the

Apostle

Apostle in *Ephes.* 4. 26. saies, *Be angry and sin not*; so say I to thee, desire death but sin not in thy desire: every desire of death, is not a good and a warrantable desire; there is a holy desire of death, and there is a sinful desire of death, and have a care thou sinnest not.

Quest. But you will say then, How far may a man desire death? When are his desires holy, and when are they sinful? This is a Case of Conscience, that is very obvious and obnoxious to most of Gods people at one time or other, and therefore I shall spend some time in answer.

First, I shall shew you when a mans desires of death are sinful. And secondly, When they are holy and good.

1. First of all, Desires of death are *Sinful*, when a man shall act any thing against his own life: I say, when a creature shall act any thing against his own life, when a man or woman shall do any thing that shall shorten their own daies, or when they shall refuse the comfort that God hath given, or helps to prolong life: if a mans hand be found against his own life, it proceeds from a sinful and wicked desire of death. There's great evil in this, let me shew you the evil. For,

1. First, It *doth pluck that out of Gods hand, which God hath challenged as his right: the issues of life and death they belong to the Lord*; my times are in thy hand, saies *David*; now it is wicked boldness for a man to pluck times out of Gods hand; when a man will have them in his own hand, and not that God should have the disposal of them.

2. Secondly, Besides, There is this evil in it; *A man casts away the most precious Jewel, when he acts against his own life*; he casts away the most pretious Jewel in nature: Life is the preciousest of all natural gifts; Life is a Talent, a great Talent, it is a Talent

given thee for to improve it for God, not to waste it away; God gives thee this Talent, that it may be laid out for him, that thy life may be laid out for his name and glory, and not to cast it away at thy own pleasure, or displeasure: know therefore, that if any man shall at any time act any thing against his own life, God will call him to account for it; if the wicked servant was condemned, because he did not improve his Talent, what shall become of him that threw away his Talent? Life is precious; when a man shall act any thing against his own life, it proceeds from sinful desires of death.

3. Thirdly, Again, Desires of death are sinful, *When a man shall desire to die, before he knows what it is to live or to die*; when a man desires to die, before he hath begun to live, or before he knows what it is to die. There is many a poor creature will be speaking against his life: O that my life were at an end; O that God would take me out of the World: But hast thou begun to live yet to God? Many a poor creature will speak against his own life before he knows what God hath done for him: hast thou done the work God hath sent thee into the World for? Hast thou glorified his name on earth? Hast thou finished thy course? Hast thou considered these things before thou desirest to die? Dost thou know what it is to die? Hast thou considered that death is a door that opens to Eternity? It opens to an Eternal condition, to a place whence there is no return: Hast thou considered what door death will open to thee, whether to the inheritance of the Saints in light, or to an inheritance with the wicked in utter darkness? If thou hast not well considered of these things before thou desirest to die, then these desires of death are sinful desires: No, rather go first to

God,

God, and desire him to teach thee to live. It may be thou hast been twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years in the flesh, hast thou begun to live? hast thou made him the end of all thy services? dost thou bring forth fruit to him, and not to thy self? is it he that strengthens thee and carries thee out to all thy duties and services? is Christ thy life? Thou hadst need know what it is to live: desire that God would teach thee, what is the end he sent thee into the World for, the cause of thy coming, rather that thou maist know how to live, and when to die, that when death comes it may be gain, for if thou dost desire death before, thy desires are sinful.

4. Again; Fourthly, Desires of death are sinful, *When a man desires death in a passion*: It is a failing that is incident unto Gods own people, and therefore you had need take heed of it: It was *Jonah*'s fault, and also *Elias* failing, in *Jonah* 4. 3. saies he, *Take away my life, it is better for me to die than to live*; and when *Jonah* spake this, he was in a great passion: saies God in Verse 9. *Dost thou well to be angry? I do well to be angry even unto the death.* Was *Jonah* fit to die now? to die in an anger, to die in a passion? Certainly if at any time, *Jonah* was now unfit to die. It was a strange passion he was now in, and at this time he was angry with God himself, and yet this man will needs die; did he know what he said? O, passion, passion is blind and unreasonable; he will go to God, he will go to the Throne of God, to dwell with God for ever, when he is angry with him, he is angry with the grace and mercy of God, in *Jonah* 4. 2, 3. *For I know that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil: Therefore now, O Lord, take I beseech thee, my life from me, for it is better for me to die*

than to live. Certainly *Jonah* was now unfit to die, to go to God, whenas there were such contrary distempers prevailed in his spirit, such a distemper as was most contrary to God; God was full of love, full of bowels and pity, full of meekness, patience, compassion, calmness and quietness of mind: contrary to all this, *Jonah* must and would needs die; here's a passion which is a sinful desire of death; and so *Elijah* in 1 *Kings* 19. 4. *But he himself went a daies journey in the Wilderness, and came and sat down under a Juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life: for I am no better than my Fathers*; *Jonah* will die in a passion of anger; *Elijah* would die in a passion of fear: he was afraid of *Jezebel*, afraid that she should cut him off, but it was his failing; what was *Elijah* loth to be made a Martyr? would he die? and is he loth to die in Gods cause? to die for the truth? why, would *Elijah* die, yet afraid that God won't support him, and uphold him in his way? This is his infirmity, like unto those of *Moses*'s; therefore, Brethren, take heed of *Elijah*'s fears, and *Jonah*'s passion. It is common, if they meet with any discontent, O then that God would take away my life, O that I were out of the world; thus to desire to die when in passion, thou art least fit to die; and therefore it is a sinful desire. That's a Third. Again,

4. Fourthly, Desires of death are sinful when a man shall desire to die, *only to gain ease to the Flesh*, to be rid of some troubles or afflictions that lay upon him: When a man saies, O I lye under a heavy burden, and I know not how to get rid of it, O that God would make an end of my daies, for I see if such or such affliction comes upon me, I know not how to bear it when it comes; O that God would take away my life before-hand;

hand; this is a desire of the flesh, which is a sinful desire. I will shew you the sinfulness of it, when a man desires to die only upon these grounds, to be rid of trouble and affliction.

1. First, He doth charge God foolishly: It is said of *Job* in the latter end of the first Chapter, *In all this he sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* But afterward *Job* did charge God, when he came to consider the day of his birth, he spake against his own life, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life given to the bitter in soul?* There *Job* did charge God foolishly, as if God were not wise enough to measure out thy portion; O thou wouldst die that thou maist be eased of such and such an affliction, thou chargest God with want of faithfulness, want of wisdom, want of love: see what *Absalom* said when he flattered with the people, *O that I were Judge,* saith he, *I would hear every mans Cause, and it should not be so and so; I would rule better than my Father David*; he charged his Government with folly, I would do Justice better than he. And truly so thou saiest, O that I were in Gods place, O that I sat upon the Throne, I would dispose better of my own condition, I would dispose of it with more wisdom, and more love, and more compassion. What a high charge is this to lay upon God! O, have a care thou dost not charge God; thou saist, wherefore is life given to thee in such an affliction? thou chargest God foolishly: Dost thou not know? why God knows (it may be) that the life of Nature is continued, that so he may increase the life of grace in thee, or that he may kill the life of sin in thee, or that he may give thee more of himself, that thou maist have more experience of his love and goodness, or that thou maist be a pattern to others, a pattern of his patience, of his power and goodness, and therefore is life given thee.

2. Secondly, Nay further, When thou speakest against thy own life, and desirest to die, thou dost limit the holy one of *Israel*, and commit that sin which the Children of *Israel* did, they tempted God, and limited the holy one of *Israel*. When thou saist, O that God would take away thy life, that thy affliction may may be taken away; why, cannot God take away thy affliction, and not take away thy life? hath God no other way? He can make a hundred doors, and find out a thousand waies; must he needs open that door, the strait door of death, or else he cannot open a door of deliverance for thee? why dost thou limit and tempt the holy one of *Israel*? If thou desirest death because thou wouldst be delivered, thy desire is sinful. O desire rather that the Lord would be with thee in thy affliction, and make thee a Conquerour over thy affliction, that thou maist get above thy affliction to glorifie God in the fire. That's a Fourth. But,

5. Fifthly, Thy desires of death are sinful, *When as thy desires are unlimited*, when they are not subjected to the Will of God, when they are absolute, when a man will have no denial whether God see it good or no, whether the Lords time be come or no; thou saist it is gain, shall I not desire gain? No, thou maist not desire gain with an immoderate desire. The Apostle *James* reproves those that say, We will go, and buy, and sell, and get gain, no, but saies he, *Stay and ask God leave, If God will, we will do so and so*, &c. When you would go to the new *Jerusalem* for gain in that City, say not, *We will go, we will go*; no, say, If God will let me go: God will have thee to finish thy course: there are many that would go, though the Lord hath no need of them; these unlimited desires of death, are unlawful desires.

Quest.

Quest. But you will say, When are desires of death Lawful? I shall desire to speak a few words to that briefly.

Answ. First of all, When a man doth not desire death for death, *but death for life.* There are many poor creatures are desirous to die, but they know not wherefore; but now a holy man hath holy desires, his desires are not death for death, but death for life: for death is an enemy; to desire death, only to cease to be, only to lie still in the Grave and cease to be; the Apostle in 2 *Cor.* tells you wherefore he desired death, he don't desire to be uncloathed, *But to be cloathed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up in life; not to be uncloathed,* to lay aside the body, to be in the Grave, and to cease from being, but *to be swallowed up in life, to be cloathed upon*, to desire death for life: seek for that life which we are sure shall come into us by death, this is a lawful desire.

2. Secondly, Desires of death are lawful when a man desires to die, *that he may sin no more against God,* that corruption may be fully mortified, that there may be nothing left in the soul to provoke the Lord any longer, that may displease the eye of his glory, that it may be holy in all things, made like unto Christ, even without sin: a gracious heart saies and believes, because the Lord hath spoken it, that death shall be the death of sin, as well as the death of the body, sin brought death into the world, and death shall carry sin quite away, that at death it shall be abolished, that there shall be no more sense of sin, no sense of lust; to desire death for this end, that the creature may sin no more, that God may be displeased no more, and grieved no more, this is a lawful desire.

3. Thirdly, When a man desires death, that he may enjoy communion with Christ, this is lawful, to enjoy

full communion with Christ, that was the Apostles desire, *Phil.* 1. 23. *Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better*; wherefore doth he desire to be dissolved? he tells you, *To be with Christ*, to see the face of Christ, to enjoy the presence of Christ, that he may be filled with the love of Christ, and behold the glory of Christ, and may be for ever in the presence of Christ, and never look off his face, but to enjoy full and perfect communion with Christ; to desire death for these ends is lawful.

4. Again, Fourthly, When a man desires death, *That he may lift up the name of God in Heaven, that he may do the Will of God perfectly, as it is done in Heaven by the Saints and Angels.* O here he cometh short in all the works and services he desires to do, he cannot do the thousandth part of that which he desires to do, and therefore desires death, that he may lift up the name of God fully in Heaven, that he may there be swallowed up in the present enjoyment of God and Christ, that he may be infinitely enlarged to sing *Hallelujahs* unto God to all Eternity; thus to desire death is lawful. But,

5. Fifthly and lastly, to say no more, *This desire of death must be with an indifferency to the Will of God:* though it be for never such good ends, though a man desires death for lifes sake, though he desire death that he may sin no more, that he may be with Christ, that he may lift up the name of God fully in Heaven; yet if it be not with an indifferency to the Will of God, it is not a holy and lawful desire: and therefore the Apostle in the Text, refers himself to the Will of God, *I am in a strait, I know not what to do: it is best for me to die, I am in a strait, I will not determine:* though I shall be deprived of my gain, and be a loser by it, yet it is no great matter, if God may gain any thing by my

my life, if his Church may gain any thing, if any poor soul may gain any thing, if God hath any further work for me, I am content to live, *I know not what to choose*, saies he, but I refer my self to God, this makes the desires of death lawful. When a man hath considered all, and yet notwithstanding he knows death shall be gain to him, yet he refers himself still to the Will of God. If thou hast any service which may be for the good of thy people, and for the advancement of thy name, if thou hast any message, though it is hard to keep from home, if the Lord will have me do any service for him, why, I am willing. When the desires of death are thus referred to the Will of God, submitting to his Will, whether by life or death; thus are the desires of death holy and lawful. Thus have I shown you when desires of death are sinful, and when lawful. The Application of the Point is yet behind.

SER-

SERMON VIII.

PHILIP. 1. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

THE Subject in hand is Gain, and therefore I hope you that are wise Merchants will not be weary of it: the whole World is for gain; every man saies, Who will shew us any good? I have shewed you a great deal of gain that is by death, for those that have interest in Christ: and O that the Lord would make your hearts desirous to know how you shall get this gain, how you may so live as that the great venture you make of death may be gain unto you. But I shall prosecute that in its time. You may remember the last day we spent most of the time in Answering a Question.

Whether it be lawful to desire death or no? I told you there is a good desire, and there is a sinful desire of death, and I shewed you the differences. But I shall wave repetition, and come to the Application of the Point.

Use 1. It lets us see what a fancy or conceit that is that men have taken up, That the soul hath no existence without the body, but that it ceases to be, when-

as

as the body is laid in the dust: there is such a conceit that the soul sleeps, or that it ceases to be until the day of Resurrection, that God should give life again to the body.

This Text doth confute that opinion; though it may be matter of temptation, even to Gods own people: if it were so, then it should not be gain to die, if the soul cease to be, when separated from the body, it should not be gain to die. I might bring many places to confute this: what think you of that in *Luk.* 23. 43. where Christ saies unto the good Thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*; surely Christ speaks not of the body, it could not be understood of the Grave that his body should rest in, for to be with Christ in Paradise implies more: Paradise was a place of pleasure, it was a place in which *Adam* did enjoy the presence of God: therefore certainly the soul hath existence when separated from the body, the souls of the righteous are where they do enjoy the presence of God. Again, that in *Rev.* 6. 9, 10. where it is said of them that are under the Altar, they cryed out, *How long Lord, holy and true, will it be, e're thou avenge our blood on them that dwell on the Earth?* Then the soul hath existence when it is out of the body, for these souls cryed, *How long Lord?* It is true, there are divers operations of the soul which do cease, which do depend upon the operation of the body; but there are many operations in the soul which the soul doth most excellently exercise, notwithstanding its separation from the body: the Apostle *Paul* was in a holy ecstasie as out of the body, and when he was in the body it's said, *His soul saw such things as were unutterable*, not to be seen nor heard. But I shall not need to go any further to strengthen you against this temptation; the Apostle in this Chapter saith, *I am*

in

in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better. Where you may see, first, That the soul when it is separated from the body, it doth not cease to be, for it is only departed: *I desire to depart,* an active expression; some Translate it, to flinch, or move, to remove from one house to another; or to be loosed, or dissolved, so some Translate it: I desire to be set free from this my prison; my soul is in prison while I am in the body, now I desire to depart from this house, to be fetch'd from this house, to depart from this Prison, and to be with Christ, to depart and to be with Christ: so then there is a being with Christ in a state of dissolution, for the Apostle doth desire to be dissolved for this very end, that when he was dissolved, he might be with Christ; there is a being with Christ, there is an enjoyment of Christ in a state of dissolution. Nay, he saith, *It is far better:* he knew that he should enjoy more of Christ when he was gone, he should have more intimate communion with the Lord Jesus in a state of separation, than when he was in the body, that condition was far better; now I say, if the soul do sleep, if it ceases to be, or to act or to enjoy Christ, when it is separated from the body till the day of Resurrection; why, then he could not have said, it is far better to die, and to be with Christ. But it may be said, it is better to die, because death frees from the miseries of life, and so the Apostle might say, It is better to die, because death frees from the miseries of life, because there is a rest and a cessation from the present troubles and turmoils in the world. If there had been nothing else, he could not have said, It is better to die; for I say, to live, to live the most afflicted life, and the most troublesom life in the world is better than to die, and to cease to be, if there be not an enjoyment

of

of life after that departure. Yea, it had been better for the Apostle to have lived, if there had been no existence of the soul, for then all knowledge of God and of Christ cease, and no actings for God, no lifting up of the name of God, it had been better for him to have lived to have been serviceable to God in his generation, to have lived to have known Christ, for all knowledge of God, upon that supposition, is to be lost and gone; to reft thus, his gain is no better than the beasts gain, the very beasts gain reft to the flesh: If there had been no more gain by death, he could not have said, It had been better to die than to live; and to live, it had been far better than to die and rest, if there had not been a further enjoyment of God in Christ, in that estate of separation and dissolution. And therefore I beseech you that you would hold this fast, that you may be strengthened against this temptation, that there is no enjoyment of God and Christ in a state of separation, when the soul is loosened from the body: though it is true, the full enjoyment, the full revelation of heaven is not until the Resurrection, when soul and body shall both enjoy the glory of heaven. But so much for the first Use.

Use 2. Secondly, If death be gain where Christ is life: then this may comfort you in the loss of your friends, you should not mourn inordinately for the loss of your friends, when you have hopes of their death. It is true, it is not only lawful, but it is a duty to mourn. I shall shew you how far it is lawful to mourn in the loss of friends.

1. First of all, As seeing that the hand of God is gone out against you: If the Lord comes and makes any breach in a Family, and the hand of God is gone out against you, the Lord would that men should lay it to heart, in *Heb.* 12. 5. *My son despise not the chastening*

chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked: there are two great extreams, either to despise the chastening of the Lord, or else to faint under it; the Lord would that we should lay his hand to heart when it is upon us; to consider what is the voice of the Rod, what is the message that is in its mouth, and what it is that the Lord speaks by such and such an affliction. Again,

2. Secondly, Our mourning ought to be either more or less according as those that we part with are more or less useful and serviceable in their Generation; when God plucks away those that are Pillars, those that should stand in the gap, those that should prevent Judgements, that should hold his hand from striking a Nation; in such a case the Lord allows, nay, he calls for a great deal of sorrow: and it is made a sign of a hard-hearted people, and a people that are fit for destruction, and nigh to ruine, when the Lord shall take away such Instruments, and it is not laid to heart, in *Isa.* 57. 1. *The righteous perish,* saith he, *no man lay it to heart, none considereth that they are taken away from the evil to come*; It is a sign that there was evil a coming to that people, when the righteous are taken away, and they do not lay it to heart. But I say, when that we have no hopes in the death of Friends, when we see the hand of the Lord is gone out to cut off men in sin, when God shall meet them in a way of rebellion, I confess there is more cause of taking up a sad lamentation. You know what was *David*'s carriage in this case, when God smote his son *Absalom*, he was smitten in his rebellion, he died in his sin, and therefore *David* takes up a sad lamentation, *O Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee*; but in another case, in the case of another Child, when his Child died, in whose death he had hopes, *David* did

did not mourn with bitterness then, he rather was comforted: seeing it is the Will of God, *I shall go to him*, saies he, *he shall not return to me*. Thus you see how far it is lawful to mourn, whenas God takes away a friend by death; but when we have hopes in their death, that death is gain unto them, this should exceedingly compose and calm and quiet our spirits.

Object. But you will say, Your loss is great, your loss is exceeding great, such a dear Husband, such a loving Wife, such a beloved Child, there's none knows how great my loss is, and therefore do not condemn me in my mourning.

Answ. I Answer, How dear so ever thy friend, and how great so ever thy loss be, if thou hast interest in Christ, thy loss cannot undo thee; if the Lord be thy portion, thy loss cannot undo thee: *Baruch* was reproved because he took up so sad a lamentation in *Isa.* 45. 3. *Woe is me, for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow, I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest: woe is me*, &c. he had interest in God, and therefore he did not well so to complain, because his loss could not un-do him; yea, thy loss is not so great but God can make it up in himself, and if God give thee more of himself, though less of the creature, thou shalt have no cause to complain.

3. Thirdly, But again, Consider, and look upon not only thy loss, but look upon the gain of thy friend: if thou hast hopes in his death, look upon his gain, and let that quiet thy spirit; why, he gains rest, he is laid down to sleep, will you mourn when your friends lie down in their beds to sleep? The righteous when death comes, it laies them upon their beds to sleep; if thy friend gain rest, why then shouldst thou disquiet thy self by inordinate mourning? He gains peace and joy: the righteous enter into peace, and therefore

why

why shouldst thou so mourn, as to disturb thy peace, or to quench and damp the joy of the Lord in thee? Why, it is thy friend that dies in the Lord, it is the time of his advancement, he is advanced, it is his Marriage-day, or a day of Coronation, and therefore there is no cause of inordinate mourning. And you that are Parents, that love your Children never so dearly, you will be willing to part with them for their preferment, though you marry them, when it may be you shall enjoy little of them, when they shall go hundreds of Miles from you, you shall enjoy little of them; But you will say, it is to a man that hath a great Estate, and why should I hinder them? Now are you willing to part with your Children for preferment when you see they may enjoy a little of earth, and shall you be unwilling to part with them, when they may enjoy the fulness of Heaven? Will you trust a man, a creature with them, and will not you trust the Lord with them, who hath more right to them than you, and hath more bowels towards them, and more power to do them good, infinitely more than you? Why; you are willing to part with your friends for their safety; if dangers are coming, you are content that your friends should be hidden in places of safety, and shall you mourn, if the Lord shall take your friends to hide them? for if God do take away the righteous, it is but to hide them, he will hide them from the evils to come, he will take them and hold them in the Grave, that they shall not see the evil that is coming, he will hide them till all calamities be past and gone, and they shall then come again in the time of the Resurrection. *If you love me*, saies Christ, *you would rejoice because I say I go to the Father:* Do you love your friends, and will you mourn inordinately because they go to their Father, when they go to lie in the bosom of their Father?

But

But you will say, Did not Christ weep when *Lazarus* was dead? Christ wept and mourned. It is lawful to mourn, I told you before, and how far you may mourn; But it is conceived, our Lord did not mourn nor weep so much because *Lazarus* was dead, as because *Lazarus* was to live again; our friend *Lazarus* sleepeth: Christ did not weep because of that; Christ knew what he intended to do, that *Lazarus* should be raised again, therefore he did not weep for the loss of *Lazarus*, but rather he wept that *Lazarus* was coming into a troublesome World, for he knew that his friend *Lazarus* should be a loser by it, though *Lazarus* was content that Christ might be glorified to come again; even as Christ was content to leave the glory of Heaven to do his Father service. Christ knew *Lazarus* should be a loser, and therefore he was very loth to awake him, to stir him; his friend was now lain down to sleep; and shall he awake him before the morning? Therefore was it that Christ wept. Still, I say, retain this as a ground of Consolation, in the parting with your friends; when ever you have hopes in their death, know that it is a time of their advancement, and therefore whilst you have your friends; do all the good to them you can, and get all the good from them you can, so that that neglect of yours may not be a burden to you, and be a gaul to you in the loss of friends, but when God shall call for them, when you have hopes in their death, do not grieve inordinately, but know and rest in this, and rejoice in it that it is their gain, and their greatest advantage. So much for the second Use.

Use 3. Let this stir up every one to be inquisitive, how death shall be made gain to them; I say, let every one seek after this, it is a point of as great concernment as you have met with, and therefore you should

spend many thoughts upon it; how shall you know, and how shall you get assurance of this, That when death comes it shall be gain unto you? Let me stir you up to seek after this, to get the knowledge and assurance of it. Why Consider,

1. First of all, That you cannot withstand the stroke of death, you had need make haste in this work, I say, you cannot out-stand the stroke of death when it comes; the stroke is unavoidable. Poor man! he is crush'd before the very Moth, there is a decree, and an appointment of God concerning it, and therefore it cannot be withstood. O how little do men exercise themselves in the thoughts of this? That man doth not only die, because he is made of dust, and so must return to dust, all creatures must be dissolved into their principle; but he dies by his Statute Law, he dies by the decree and appointment of God, which was inflicted by way of punishment, and this still makes it more certain: *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death, which was appointed for all men once to die; there is no man can redeem his soul from going down to the Grave*; what man is it that lives and shall not see death? It is every one of your conditions, every soul that is here: and therefore what need of looking out to get assurance that death shall be gain!

2. Secondly, Nay let me tell you further, that you may make the more haste in this work, This time is like to be a time of great Mortality, Judgements will sweep away many, Plagues shall be poured out upon the World, till the World be reconciled to God and his Truth; and now in this latter time, there shall be greater opposition than ever, and so greater Plagues than ever; now that Christ is making way for his Kingdom, he will bear down thousands before him. Look to your selves, you had need get assurance that

death

had with thee before the World was. And so it is said of *David, After he had served his Generation according to the Will of God, he fell asleep*; death was welcom to him, as sleep is to a weary man; when his work was done he lay down with comfort, there is nothing to trouble him, his work is done: after he had served his Generation he fell asleep. There is some work God hath appointed to every one of us, O desire the Lord to teach you to know what that work is he hath put into your hand, and sent you into the world for, O do that work with all your might, that when death comes it may be welcom, as welcom to you as sleep is to a weary man. But again,

Direct. 5. Fifthly, To fortifie your hearts against the fear of death whilst you live, *Live much upon Christ*, make Jesus Christ your life continually, where Christ is life there death is gain; be looking up to Jesus Christ to be a principle of life to you, and to act you continually, live upon him for Justification, live upon him for Sanctification, live upon him for all your comforts, make much use of Jesus Christ continually; the soul that hath lived upon Christ, that hath made him the beginning of all, and made him the end of all (for then is Christ their life) it will be exceedingly strengthened against the fears of death: Let him be the beginning of all your works and actions, take nothing in hand without the strength of Christ, look for the strength of Christ to act you, to breath in you, and to fill your sails in your motion God-ward and Heaven-ward, and let Christ be the end of all that you do; I say, propound Christ as your end, do what you do as unto Christ, whatsoever you do in your services to men, do it as unto the Lord, do your common works as unto the Lord, let Christ be the end, propound him as the end of all that you undertake; I tell you, if

Christ

Christ be not the end of a mans works, all his works are lost; Christ speaks of some that shall come and say, *Lord, Lord, have not we propheſied in thy Name, and in thy name we have caſt out Devils*; and yet in the very next words Christ saies unto them, *Depart from me you workers of Iniquity:* here is a strange Epithete, *you workers of Iniquity*; they did abundance of good, Propheſied in his Name, and cast out Devils, *&c.* and yet he calls them *workers of Iniquity*: if they be not done for Christ and to Christ, Christ will interpret them workers of Iniquity. Make Christ your life, and live upon him, and that will fit you to look death in the face without fear.

Direct. 6. Sixthly, *Converſe with Death continually*; that is another Direction that I desire the Lord might set it upon our spirits: converse with death continually, behold death at a distance, even all your life-long; see death both in the death of Christ, and in your own death. Here you may converſe with death:

1. First, In the death of Christ, and then with your death, which is approaching: Christians, Behold your own death in the death of Christ, look upon a dying and a bleeding Saviour, behold him as dead, and laid in the Grave, and what was the end of all this, but *that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, and deliver his poor people from fear of death?* Behold Christ as a mighty onquerour by Faith every day, and see death conquered: and know that when Christ conquered, he conquered as a common person, he conquered death not only for himself but for his people; O Christians, if you were wise to make improvement of the death of Christ, how might your spirits be strengthened against fears of death? The death of Christ would kill all the fears of death in you; I say, if you made improvement of the death of Christ,

you

you may go and bury the fears of death in the Grave of Christ, for he hath swallowed up death: make it your work to converse with death in the death of Christ.

And again, Converse with your own death which is approaching: O, how is this neglected? how seldom do men look for a dying hour, or a departure? how loth are men to entertain thoughts of death? I have read of an Emperour that gave a Command, That no man should name Death in his Palace, he was so afraid of death that he gave a Command upon pain of death not to hear death named; what advantage do men gain by this? This strengthens the enemy, and weakens their own hearts and spirits, because they are afraid to think of death before death comes: this doth exceedingly weaken a man against the time of his coming. I have heard of a Serpent that is called a Cockatrice, that if it sees a man, it kills him, but if he sees it, it doth him no harm: why, it is true, in this sense we are upon, If death comes upon a man it kills him, but when the soul hath seen death, and hath digested and seen death at the worst that it can do, and hath lived in a dying condition, death when it comes is able to do no harm; and therefore that's a sixth Direction; I desire the Lord would teach us to converse with death, and *to die daily*, with the Apostle.

Direct. 7. Seventhly, I desire that you would labour that *your hearts may be thorowly rooted and established in the promises*; this will fortifie you against the fears of death; upon the promises, and upon that free-grace, and that infinite righteousness that is held forth unto you in the Gospel. Many men content themselves with common thoughts and ordinary notions of Christ and the Gospel, and way of Salvation in his free-grace, and of the power of Christ in saving of poor creatures; but this is like the stony ground, they are not perswaded

of the truth of it, and so settled. And therefore how should this be fortifying against the fears of death? This cannot bear them up in the time of death. Go to the Lord, desire him that he would realize things to you, and that he would make real and deep impressions by his promise upon your souls, that so you may be supported and carried out in the midst of all fears and dangers.

Direct. 8 Eighthly, Here is one more Direction, which I shall give you, which may help to strengthen your hearts against the fears of death, and that is, *Whilst you live, labour to live in constant communion with God*; desire that the Lord would uphold your spirits in constant communion and fellowship with himself, and with his son Jesus Christ: Labour to walk with God as *Enoch* did, *He walked with God and was translated*; walk with God in your Generation, and labour to enjoy communion with God in all Ordinances, be thorowly acquainted with God, with the goings of God in your spirits, with the counsels of God, with the promises of God, that the Word may be your Counsellour and your guide, and your comforter, seek acquaintance with God: What is it that makes men afraid to die? It is because they are not acquainted with God; a man fears in going into a strange place and strange company that he knows not, it makes him fearful: O, if men were acquainted with God, if they did walk with God whilst they lived, and were acquainted with God in life, it would take away the fears of death. And truly, Brethren, you had need get extraordinary acquaintance with God before you leave your Country and Fathers house, and follow him to a place you know not; you had need be well acquainted to follow God, and in making such a venture as you have heard of: therefore make all improve-

provement that may be to get more acquaintance with God under the Gospel: Gods people are more generally freed from the fears of death, because they have more acquaintance with God; We are come, saies the Apostle, *Heb.* 12. 23. we are not only come to Jesus Christ the Mediator of the Covenant, but *we are come to God the Judge of all:* Now under the Gospel, there is the way for Christians to come with freedom and boldness to God, even to God the Judge of all; to have a sweet familiarity and acquaintance with God, even that Judge who judgeth all; and that soul that hath been acquainted with God, will not fear to go to God when God calls. There was a gracious man I have heard of, when he came to die, saies he, *I shall change my place, but not my company*; he had walked with God all his life, God was his companion, he had walked with God in all his waies, and had done his work, though he doth change his place, having walked with God on earth, he should now walk with God in Heaven: Now, O that we might thus walk with God, and not be afraid to walk with God, my Friend, my Father, my Companion. Thus much for Direction, the Lord sanctifie them to you. I shall conclude these Words and this Text with one word more.

I beseech you, you that have interest in Christ, that have Christ for life, and death for gain,

1. First of all, That you would see how you are beholding to Jesus Christ for this, that ever the Lord should make death to be gain, What a loss is there in that? What is there more dreadful than death? That the Lord Christ should make this to be gain to his people! O stand and wonder: death is not gain in it self, it is the greatest loss in the World; Ay, but this man shall comfort us concerning the toil of our hands: this man comforts, this Lord Jesus comforts concerning

death as he makes it to be gain; that which separates soul from body, which might have separated soul from God to Eternity, shall not only separate soul from body, but set it nearer unto God and Christ, and carries the soul into sweet injoyment of himself, it leaves the body in the Grave to refine it, and God will at the last day raise it up unto Glory. And therefore, I beseech you, that you would endeavour that your lives may be gain to Christ; Hath he made death gain to you? Will he make it the most gainfull venture that ever you made? How ought you to desire, by all means, that your lives may be gain to Christ? Be you willing to suffer any thing for him, for his sake: you may well do it; he hath made death to be gain to you; you may well labour, there is a *Rest* for you: Be you willing to do and suffer for Christ. Nay, you should lay out your lives for Christ, O put them off at the best advantage, to die for Christ is the best advantage, O, put off life for the best gain for Christ: you may well do it, for he hath made death exceeding gainful and advantagious to you. To conclude all with a word of consolation: You that have interest in Christ, is he your life?

What strong Consolation doth this minister unto you? O, blessed are the people that are in such a case; Christ to be gain, Christ to be advantage in life and death? There is a blessed condition, why, all you that have interest in Christ, what need you fear death? I say, what need you fear death? It cannot hurt you, it is an enemy disarmed, the sting is taken out: you may take a Wasp in your hand and put it into your bosom when the sting is out; the sting of death is out, and it cannot separate you from the love of your Father.

Nay, it will carry you unto nearer embraces of God and Christ; *I am perswaded*, saies the Apostle, *that neither life nor death, can be able to separate from the love of God in Christ*; Death cannot separate from Gods Covenant, though it may separate from body and soul, though the body lies in the Grave, yet the Covenant of Grace holds: *I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob*; the Covenant of God holds; now the Lord takes care of the very bones of the Saints in the Grave, they shall be raised by vertue of this Covenant. O what! do not you fear death? you may make a bold venture on death, you that have Christ for your life, I say, you may make a bold venture, you may shoot the Gulph of Eternity, and venture all upon him, for he is your life, and he will not fail you, you have his example, and he is gone before you, he would fortifie your hearts, he hath gone before you, he was the Captain of your Salvation, and he first broke the Ranks; he was partaker of flesh and blood with us that he might suffer death, and so that he might destroy death, and therefore Christ hath given you his Example; he intended that you should see the worst that death can do, and it can do you no more hurt than it did him, you that have interest in Christ it can do you no more hurt than it did him; he is in the Ship with you, he is Partner with you in the venture, and if you lose, he shall be the greatest loser: Christ is Partner with you in the venture; and if you shall lose in this venture, Christ had as good never have risen again, it is all one whether he suffers in his person or in his members, if they should miscarry in this great venture of death, Christ had as good never to have risen again, it is all one; O, what hath the Lord done for you, thus to fortifie your souls, and to strengthen you by his own venture

in

in that Partnership that Christ hath undertaken with you, that this may spur you on? Consider it well, is not this a blessed priviledge? *O that I might die the death of the righteous*, saith *Balaam*; no wonder he desired it; what a gain does the righteous man get in his venture? O that the Lord would perswade you to live the life of the righteous, to see the life of Christ, and to live by the Faith of the Son of God: whilst you live, Christ hath engaged that you should live the life of the righteous; but if Christ be not your life, you will never partake of the life of the righteous; for where Christ is not life, death cannot be gain.

But you will say, Do not Gods own people fear death, even as well as others? Why, we see they are subject to fears; where is the difference betwixt their death and others? they may have fears of death as well as other men.

1. Answer, It is true, even the righteous man may fear; nay, not only the fear of nature, but his fear may be sometime inordinate and sinful; Ay, but in his fear he runs to the promise, even as *Jacob* did when he was greatly distressed when he came to his brother, *Lord*, saies he, *I fear my Brother*, but he runs to the Promise, *but Lord, thou hast said, thou wilt be with me, and do me good and bless me*; he fears as well as others, but in his fears he runs to the Promise.

2. Yea moreover, To say no more but this, The righteous man shall be delivered from all his fears; therefore he does not upbraid the righteous, they have Promises to run unto, and the Lord their God will save them from their fears: even our Lord Jesus feared when death approached, he was greatly afraid, he put up strong cries with tears and groans, and yet was heard in that he feared, in *Heb.* 5. 7.

In

In the daies of his flesh he feared, and his fears made him cry aloud, and his Father that was able to save him, is able to save thee from all thy fears: these fears shall make him cry to his God, and he shall be certainly heard in that he feared, and so was made a Conquerour: And so shall it be with those that are in Christ, they shall be Conquerours over all their fears; this poor man cried, and the Lord saved him and delivered him from all his fears. So much shall serve for this time.

FINIS.

THE END.